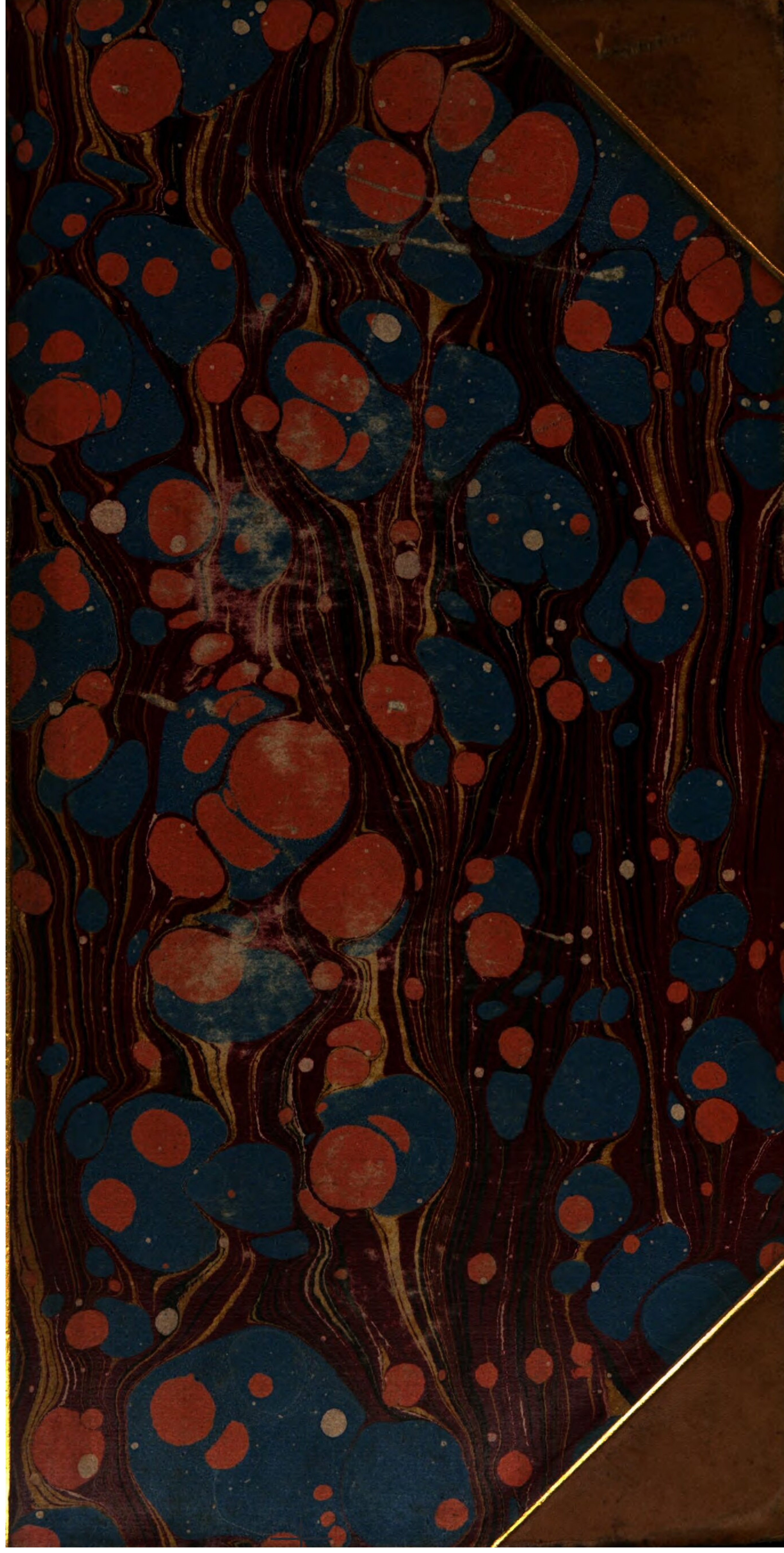
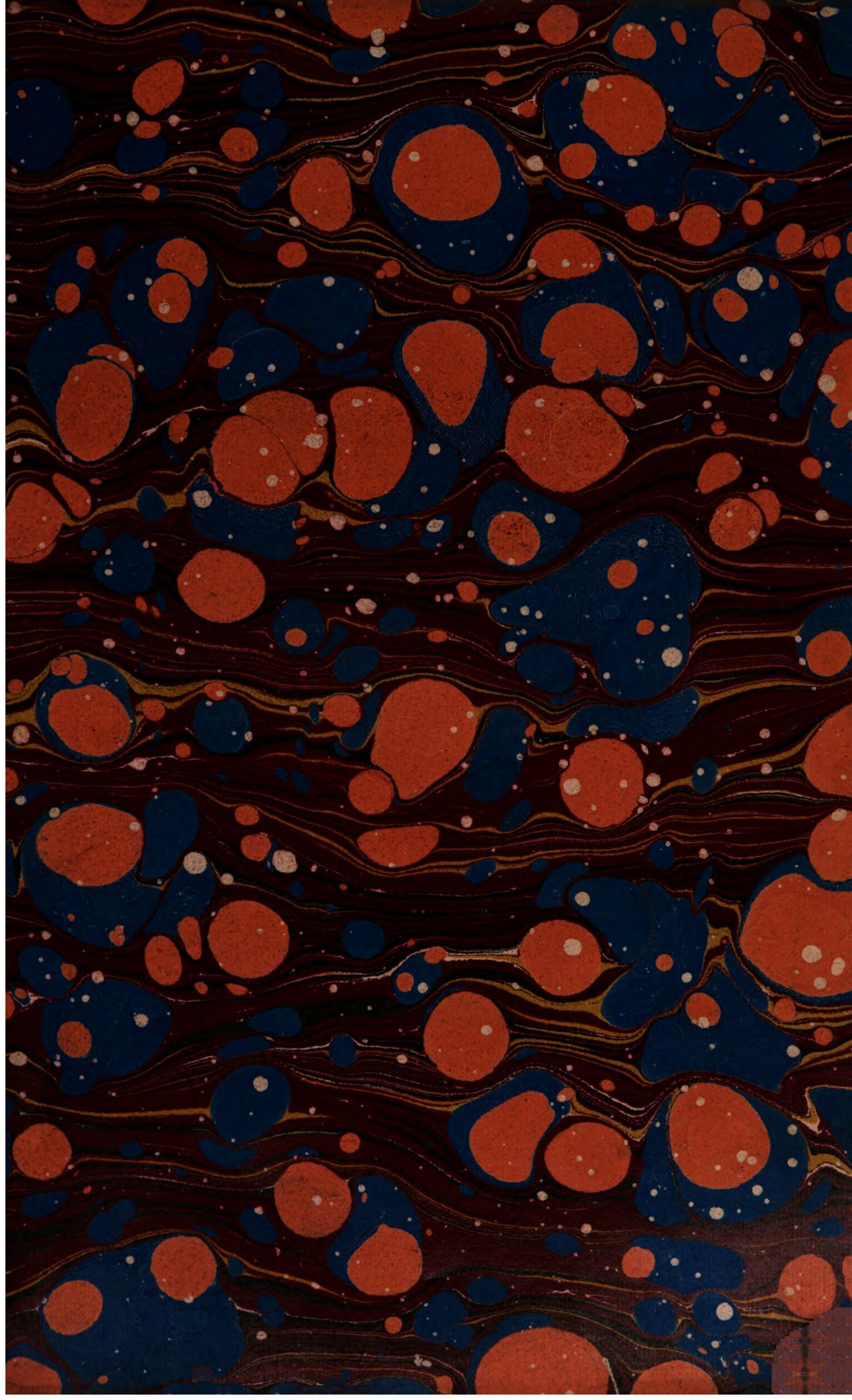




A III, 252.



Dr Strousberg.



8^o. H. misc. 3 m

Alison

ESSAYS

PRINTED BY WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS, EDINBURGH.

ESSAYS

POLITICAL, HISTORICAL, AND
MISCELLANEOUS

BY

ARCHIBALD ALISON, L.L.D.

AUTHOR OF THE "HISTORY OF EUROPE," ETC.

VOL. II.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
MDCCCL



CONTENTS OF VOL. II.

	PAGE
MONTESQUIEU,	1
HOMER, DANTE, AND MICHAEL ANGELO,	37
THE GREEK DRAMA,	68
THE ROMAN REPUBLIC,	103
MIRABEAU,	128
THE BRITISH SCHOOL OF PAINTING,	158
THE TYROL,	181
HANNIBAL,	203
NAPOLEON,	230
PARTITION OF THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS,	261
THE ATHENIAN DEMOCRACY,	286
ROBERT BRUCE,	313
NATIONAL MONUMENTS,	329
THE CRUSADES,	347
THE CARLIST STRUGGLE IN SPAIN,	376
THE COPYRIGHT QUESTION,	419
THE DECLINE OF TURKEY,	447
LAMARTINE,	478
THE ROMAN CAMPAGNA,	500
FRANCE IN 1833,	534
THE AFFGHANISTAN EXPEDITION,	612
THE OLD SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT,	635
SHIPS, COLONIES, AND COMMERCE,	658

HISTORICAL ESSAYS

MONTESQUIEU

[BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, OCTOBER 1845]

MONTESQUIEU may be fairly called the founder of the philosophy of history. In many of its most important branches he has carried it to a degree of perfection which has never since been surpassed. He first looked on human affairs with the eye of general observation; he first sought to discover the lasting causes which influence the fate of mankind; he first traced the general laws which, in every age, determine the rise or decline of nations. Some of his conclusions were hasty, many of his analogies fanciful; but he first turned the human mind to the general causes of events. It is by repeatedly deviating into error that it can alone be discovered where truth really lies: there is an alchemy in the moral, not less than the material world, in which a vast amount of genius must be lost before the discovery is made that it has taken the wrong direction. But in Montesquieu, despite such occasional and unavoidable aberrations, there is an invaluable treasure of profound views and original thought—of luminous observation and deep reflection—of philosophic observation and just generalisation. His fame has been long established—it has become European; his sayings are quoted and repeated from one end of the world to the other; but to the greater part of English readers, his greatness is known rather from the distant echo of Continental fame, than from any practical acquaintance with the writings on which it is founded.

Though Montesquieu, however, is the father of the philosophy of history, it is due to Tacitus and Machiavel to say, that he is not the originator of political thought. In the first of these writers is to be found the most profound observations on the working of the human mind, whether in individuals or bodies of men, that ever were formed by human sagacity: in the latter, a series of remarks on Roman history, and the corresponding events in the republics of modern Italy, which, in point of deep political wisdom and penetration, have never been surpassed. Lord Bacon, too, had in his Essays put forth many political maxims with that profound sagacity and unerring wisdom by which his thoughts were so pre-eminently distinguished. But still these men, great as they were, and much as they added to the materials of the philosophy of history, can hardly be said to have mastered that philosophy itself. It was not their object to do so: it did not belong to the age in which they lived to make any such attempt. They gave incomparable observations upon detached points in human annals, or the working of inherent selfishness under particular circumstances; but they did not take a general view of the tendency of national fortunes, as determined by original character or political institutions. They did not consider whence the world had come, or whither it was going. They formed no connected system in regard to the march of human events. They saw clearly the effects of particular measures, or systems of government, at the time; but they did not reflect on the chain of causes, which first raised up, and afterwards undermined it. Aristotle, the most powerful intellect of the ancient world, was of the same calibre as a political observer. He considered only the effects of the various forms of government which he saw established around him. In that survey he was admirable, but he never went beyond it. Bossuet's universal history is little more than a history of the Jews;—he refers everything to the direct and immediate agency of Providence, irrespective of the freedom of the human will. Montesquieu first fixed his eyes upon the rise, progress, and decay of nations, as worked out by the actions of free agents. The *Grandeur et Décadence des Romains* is as original as the *Principia*, and laid the foundation of a science as sublime, and perhaps still

more important to man, than the laws of the planetary bodies.

Charles, second Baron de la Brede and Montesquieu, was born at the chateau of La Brede, near Bordeaux, on the 18th January 1689. The estate of La Brede had been long in his family, which was a very ancient one: it had been erected into a barony in favour of Jacob de Lecondat, his great-great-grandfather, by Henry IV. The office of President of the Parliament (or Local Court of Justice) of Bordeaux had been acquired by his family in consequence of the marriage of his father with the daughter of the first president of that tribunal. From his earliest years, young Montesquieu evinced remarkable readiness and vivacity of mind, a circumstance which determined his father to train him to the "magistracy," as it was termed in France—a profession midway, as it were, between the career of arms peculiar to the noble, and the labours of the bar confined to persons of plebeian origin, and from which many of the greatest men, and nearly all the distinguished statesmen of France, took their rise. Montesquieu entered with the characteristic ardour of his disposition into the studies suited to that destination; and at the age of twenty he had already collected the materials of the *Esprit des Loix*, and evinced the characteristic turn of his mind for generalisation, by an immense digest which he had made of the civil law. But these dry, though important studies did not exclusively occupy his mind; he carried on, at the same time, a great variety of other pursuits. Like all men of an active and intellectual turn of mind, his recreation was found not in repose, but in change of occupation. Books of voyages and travels were collected, and read with avidity; he devoured rather than read the classical remains of Greece and Rome. "That antiquity," said he, "enchants me; and I am always ready to say with Pliny, you are going to Athens: show respect to the gods."

It was under this feeling of devout gratitude to the master minds of the ancient world, that he made his first essay in letters, which came out in a small work in the form of letters, the object of which was to show that the idolatry of most Pagans did of itself not merit eternal damnation. Probably there are few good Christians, from

Fenelon and Tillotson downwards, who will be of an opposite opinion. Even in that juvenile production are to be found traces of the sound judgment, correct taste, and general thought which characterised his later works. But he was soon thrown into the proper labours of his profession. On the 24th February 1714, he was admitted into the Parliament of Bordeaux as a councillor; and his paternal uncle, who held the president's chair, having died two years after, young Montesquieu was, on the 13th July 1716, appointed to that important office, though only twenty-seven years of age. Probably his being thrown, thus early in life, into the discharge of onerous and important duties, had an important effect in producing that firmness and maturity of judgment by which his mind was ever after distinguished. Some years afterwards, he gave a convincing proof of his fitness for the situation, in the vigour with which he remonstrated against the imposition of a fresh tax on wine, which had the effect of procuring its removal at the time, though the necessities of Government led to its being reimposed some years after. But his ardent mind was not confined to professional pursuits. He concurred in the formation of an academy of sciences at Bordeaux, and read some papers in it on natural history; and his attention being in this way turned to physical science, he wrote and published in the journals, a project for a *Physical History of the Earth, Ancient and Modern*.

But in no human being was more completely exemplified the famous line—

“The proper study of mankind is man.”

Montesquieu's genius was essentially moral and political; it was on man himself, not the material world with which he was surrounded, that his thoughts were fixed. This strong bias soon appeared in his writings. He next read at the academy at Bordeaux, a “Life of the Duke of Berwick,” and an “Essay on the Policy of the Romans in Religion,” which was the basis of the immortal work which he afterwards composed, on the rise and fall of that extraordinary people. These desultory essays gave no indication of the genius displayed in the first considerable composition which he gave to the world, which was the famous *Lettres Persannes*. They appeared in 1721, when he was thirty-two

years of age. Their success was immediate and prodigious; a certain indication, in matters of thought, that they were not destined to durable fame. They fell in with the ideas and passions of the time; they were not before it; thence their early popularity, and ultimate decline in reputation. The work was published anonymously; for the keen, but delicate, satire of French manners and vices which it contained might have endangered the author, and, as it was, he had no small difficulty, when it was known he was the writer, in escaping from its effects. It consists in a series of letters from an imaginary character, Usbeck, a Persian traveller, detailing the vices, manners, and customs of the French metropolis. The ingenuity, sarcasm, and truth which that once celebrated production contains, must not make us shut our eyes to its glaring defects. The vices of the age, as they mainly contributed to its early popularity, so have been the chief cause of its subsequent decline. It contains many passages improperly warm and voluptuous, and some which, under the mask of attacks on the Jesuits, had the appearance, at least, of being levelled at religion itself. No work, at that period, could attract attention in France, which was not disfigured by these blemishes. Even the great mind of Montesquieu, in its first essay before the public, did not escape the contagion of the age.

But, ere long, the genius of this profound thinker was devoted to more congenial and worthy objects. In 1726, he sold his office of president of the parliament of Bordeaux, partly in order to escape from the toils of legal pursuit and judicial business, which, in that mercantile and rising community, were attended with great labour, partly in order to be enabled to travel, and study the institutions and character of different nations. This was a pursuit of which he was passionately fond, and which, without doubt, had a powerful effect in giving him that vast command of detached facts in political science, and that liberal view of institutions, habits, and manners, differing in some degree from his own, by which his philosophical writings are so eminently distinguished. Here, as in the biography of almost all other really great men, it is found that some circumstances, apparently trivial or accidental, have given a permanent bent to their mind; have stored it with the appropriate knowledge,

and turned it, as it were, into the allotted sphere ; and contributed to form the *matrix* in which original thought was formed, and new truth communicated by Providence to mankind. In the course of his travels, which lasted several years, he visited successively Austria, Hungary, Italy, Switzerland, the Rhine, Flanders, Holland, and England—in the latter of which he lived two years. During these varied travels, he made notes on all the countries which he visited, which contributed largely to the great stock of political information which he had previously possessed. These notes are still extant ; but unfortunately, not in such a state of maturity as to admit of publication.

On his return to France, which took place in 1732, he retired to his native chateau of La Brede, and commenced in good earnest the great business of his life. The fruit of his studies and reflections appeared in the “*Considérations sur les Causes de la Grandeur et la Décadence des Romains*,” which was published in 1732. Great and original as this work—the most perfect of all his compositions—was, it did not give vent to the whole ideas which filled his capacious mind. Rome, great as it was, was but a single state ; it was the comparison with other states, the development of the general principles which run through the jurisprudence and institutions of all nations, which occupied his thoughts. The success which attended his essay on the institutions and progress of a single people encouraged him to enlarge his views, and extend his labours. He came to embrace the whole known world, civilised and uncivilised, in his plan ; and after fourteen years of assiduous labours and toil, the immortal “*Spirit of Laws*” appeared.

The history of Montesquieu’s mind, during the progress of this great work, is singularly curious and interesting. At times he wrote to his friends that his great work advanced “*à pas de géant* ;” at others, he was depressed by the slow progress which it made, and overwhelmed by the prodigious mass of materials which required to be worked into the vast structure. So distrustful was he of its success, even after the vast labour he had employed in its composition, that he sent his manuscript before publication to a friend on whose judgment he could rely—Helvetius. That friend, notwithstanding all his penetration, was so mistaken in his reckon-

ing, that he conceived the most serious disquietude as to the ruin of Montesquieu's reputation by the publication of such a work. Such was his alarm, that he did not venture to write to the author on the subject, but gave the manuscript to another critic, Saurin, the author of a work entitled *Spartacus*, long since extinct, who passed the same judgment upon it. Both concurred in thinking that the reputation of Montesquieu would be entirely destroyed by the publication of the new manuscript; the brilliant author of the semi-voluptuous, semi-infidel, *Lettres Persannes*, would sink into a mere Legist, a dull commentator on pandects and statutes, if he published the *Esprit des Loix*. "That," said Helvetius, "is what afflicts me for him, and for humanity, which he was so well qualified to have served." It was agreed between them that Helvetius should write to Montesquieu to give him an account of their joint opinion, that he should not give it to the world in its present state. Saurin, with some reason, was afraid that Montesquieu would be hurt at their communication; but Helvetius wrote to him, after having conversed with the author on the subject:—"Be not uneasy; he is not hurt at our advice; he loves frankness in his friends. He is willing to bear with discussions, but answers only by sallies, and rarely changes his opinions. I have not given him ours from any idea that he would either change his conduct or modify his preconceived ideas, but from a sense of the duty of sincerity, cost what it will, with friends. When the light of truth shall have dispelled the illusions of self-love, he will at least not be able to reproach us with having been less indulgent than the public."

Montesquieu, however, was not discouraged. He sent his manuscript to the press with hardly any alteration, and took for his motto, *Prolem sine matre Creatam*;* in allusion to the originality of his conception, and the total want of any previous model on which it had been formed. The work appeared in the month of July 1748; and its success, so far as the sale went, was prodigious. Before two years had elapsed, it had gone through twenty-two editions, and had been translated into most of the European languages. This early success, rare in works of profound and original thought,

* "An offspring created without a mother."

showed that, though it was in advance of the age, it was but a little in advance ; and that it had struck a key which was ready to vibrate in the general mind. Like all distinguished works, if it was much read and admired by some, it was as keenly criticised and cut to pieces by others. Madame du Deffand said it was not the *Esprit des Loix* he had written, but *Esprit Sur les Loix*. This expression made a great noise ; it had a certain degree of truth, just enough when coupled with epigrammatic brevity to make the fortune of the sage. Encouraged by its success, the enemies of original genius, ever ready to assail it, united their forces, and Montesquieu was soon the object of repeated and envenomed attacks. It was said that, to establish certain favourite theories, he availed himself of the testimony of travellers obscure and of doubtful credit ; that he leapt too rapidly from particulars to general conclusions ; that he ascribed to the influence of climate and physical laws what was in fact the result of moral or political causes ; that he had split the same subject into small chapters, so confusedly put together, that there was no order or system in the work ; that it was still incomplete, and wanted the master-hand which was to put it together ; and that it resembled the detached pieces of a Mosaic pavement before they are put together, each of which is fair or brilliant in itself, but which have no meaning or expression till arranged by the master-hand of the artist. There was some truth in all these criticisms ; it is rare that it is otherwise with the reproaches made against a work of original thought. Envy generally discovers a blot to hit. Malignity is seldom at a loss for some blemish to point out. It is by exaggerating slight defects, and preserving silence on great merits, that literary jealousy ever tries to work out its wretched spite. The wisdom of an author is not to resent or overlook, but in silence to profit by such sallies ; converting thus the industry and envy of his enemies into a source of advantage to himself.

Montesquieu, in pursuance of these principles, passed over in silence the malignant attacks of a herd of critics, whose works are now buried in the charnel-house of time, but who strove, with all the fury of envy and disappointment, to extinguish his rising fame. When pressed by some of his friends to answer some of these attacks, he replied,—“ It is

unnecessary ; I am sufficiently avenged on some by the neglect of the public, on others by its indignation." The only instance in which he deviated from that wise resolution was in replying to the attacks of an anonymous critic, who, in a journal entitled the *Nouvelles Ecclesiastique*, had represented him as an atheist. In his *Lettres Persannes*, though he had never assailed the great principles of his religion, he had, in his sallies against the Jesuits, gone far to induce the belief that he was inclined to do so ; and already done enough in the estimation of the tyrannical and bigotted ecclesiastics who, at that period, ruled the Church of France, to warrant his being included in the class of infidel writers. But his mind, chastened by years, enlightened by travelling and reflection, had come to cast off the prejudices of his age and country, the necessary result of the Romish tyranny by which it had been oppressed, but unworthy of an intellect of such grasp and candour. In the Protestant countries of Europe, particularly Holland and England, he had seen the working of Christianity detached from the rigid despotism by which the Church of Rome fetters belief, and the well-conceived appliances by which it stimulates imagination, and opens a refuge for frailty. Impressed with the new ideas thus awakened in his mind, he had, in his *Esprit des Loix*, pronounced a studious and sincere eulogium on Christianity ; recommending it, not only as the most perfect of all systems of religious belief, but as the only secure basis of social order and improvement. It was material to correct the impression, partly just, partly erroneous, which his earlier and more indiscreet writings had produced ; and, with this view, he wrote and published his *Defense de l'Esprit des Loix*. This little piece is a model of just and candid reasoning, accompanied with a refined and delicate vein of ridicule, which disarmed opposition without giving ground for resentment. He congratulated himself on the fine satire with which he had overthrown his enemies. "What pleases me in my defence is not so much," said he, "to have floored the ecclesiastics, but to have let them fall so gently." Posterity will find a more valuable charm in this little production ; it is, that Montesquieu in it has unconsciously painted himself. His contemporaries have recorded that, in reading it, they could believe

they heard the author speak ; and this proves that his talents in conversation had been equal to those he displayed in writing, —a combination very rare in writers of the highest class.

The fame of Montesquieu, great as it was in his own country, was even greater in foreign ones. In England, in particular, the *Esprit des Loix* early acquired a prodigious reputation. It was read and admired by all persons of thought and education. This was partly the consequence of England being so much in advance of France in the career of liberty—alike in matters civil and ecclesiastical. The new ideas, hardy thoughts, and original conceptions of the great work met with a ready reception and cordial admiration in the land of freedom and the Reformation—in the country where thought had so long been turned to political subjects, contemplation to religious meditation. But another cause of lasting influence also contributed to the same effect. Original genius is ever more readily and willingly admired in foreign states than its own : a prophet has no honour in his own country. He interferes too much with existing influences or reputations. To foreigners he is more remote—more like a dead man. Human vanity is less hurt by his elevation.

The latter years of Montesquieu's life were spent almost entirely in retirement at his paternal chateau of La Brede, varied occasionally by visits to the great world at Paris. He was occupied in agriculture and gardening—tenacious of his seignorial rights, but indulgent to the last degree to his tenantry, by whom he was adored. Never was exemplified, in a more remarkable manner, the soothing influence of the recollections of a well-spent life on the felicity of its later years, or the fountains of happiness which may be opened in the breast itself, from the calm serenity of conscious power and great achievement. He conversed much with the farmers and peasants on his estate, whose houses he frequently entered, and whose convivialities, on occasion of a marriage or a birth, he seldom failed to attend. He often preferred their conversation to that of persons their superiors in rank or information,—“for,” said he, “they are not learned enough to enter into argument ; they only tell you what they know, which frequently you do not know yourself.” Though he lived with the great when in Paris, partly

from necessity, partly from inclination, yet their society was noways necessary to his happiness. He flew, as soon as he could, from their brilliant assemblies to the retirement of his estate, where he found with joy, philosophy, books, and repose. Surrounded by the people of the country in their hours of leisure, after having studied man in the intercourse of the world and the history of nations, he studied it in those simple minds which nature alone had taught ; and he found something to learn there. He conversed cheerfully with them ; like Socrates, he drew out their talents and information ; he appeared to take as much pleasure in their conversation as in that of the brilliant circles by which he was courted in the capital ; he terminated their disputes by his wisdom, assuaged their sufferings by his beneficence.

In society he was uniformly affable, cheerful, and considerate. His conversation was light, agreeable, and instructive, full of anecdotes of the great number of eminent men with whom he had lived. Like his style in writing, it was brief, *tranchant*, and epigrammatic, full of wit and observation, but without a particle of bitterness or satire. Like all men of the highest class of intellect, he was totally devoid of envy or jealousy. None more readily applauded genius or merit in others, or was more desirous on all occasions to bring it forward, and give it its due reward. No one recounted anecdotes with more vivacity, happier effect, or less tedium. He knew that the close of all such narratives contains, in general, all that is pleasing in them : and therefore he hastened to arrive at it before the patience of his hearers could be exhausted. No man had a greater horror at long stories. He was frequently absent, and remained in society for some time wrapt in thought, without speaking ; but never failed, on such occasions, to make amends by some unexpected remark or anecdote, which revived the languishing conversation. His mind was full : no subject could be mentioned on which he was not informed ; but he never brought his knowledge ostentatiously forward, and sought rather to draw out those around him than to lead the conversation ;—rather to make others shine, than to do so himself.

He was regular and methodical in his life ; and this arose not merely from his character and disposition, but from the order he had prescribed to himself in his studies. Though

capable of long-continued effort and profound meditation, he never exhausted his strength ; he uniformly changed the subject of his labour, or book, to some recreation, before feeling the sensation of fatigue. He was remarkably temperate in his habits, serene and unruffled in his mind, and enjoyed, in consequence, a much larger share of happiness than falls to the lot of most men. He was fortunately married, had affectionate children, whose kindness and attentions solaced his declining years ; and his remarkable prudence and economy not only preserved him from those pecuniary embarrassments so common to men of genius, but enabled him frequently to indulge the benevolence of his disposition by splendid acts of generosity. He frequently said that he had never experienced a chagrin in life, which an hour's reading did not dissipate. In his later years, when his eyesight was affected, he depended chiefly on listening to reading aloud, which was done alternately by his secretary and one of his daughters. He had everything which could make life happy ; an ample fortune, affectionate family, fame never contested, the consciousness of great powers nobly applied. "I have never through life," said he in his old age, "had a chagrin, still less an hour of ennui. I waken in the morning with a secret pleasure at beholding the light. I gaze upon it with a species of ravishment. All the day I am content. In the evening, when I retire to rest, I fall into a sort of reverie which prevents the effort of thought, and I pass the night without once wakening."

No man ever possessed a higher sense of the dignity of intellectual power, of its great and glorious mission, of its superiority to all the world calls great, and of the consequent jealousy and aversion with which it is sure to be regarded by the depositaries of political authority. He was neglected by them ; he knew it and expected it ; it never gave him a moment's chagrin. "He was not insensible," says d'Alembert, "to glory ; but he desired to win it only by deserving it. Never did he attempt to enhance his reputation by the underhand devices and secret machinations by which second-rate men so often strive to sustain their literary fortunes. Worthy of every eulogy and of every recompense, he asked nothing, and was noways surprised at being forgot. But he had courage enough in critical circumstances to solicit

the protection at court of men of letters persecuted and unfortunate, and he obtained their restoration to favour." What a picture of the first man of his age, living in retirement, asking nothing, noways surprised at being forgot! He knew human nature well who acted thus after writing the *Esprit des Loix*. Power loves talent as long as it serves itself, when it is useful but manageable: it hates it when it becomes its instructor. Self-love is gratified by the subservience of genius in the first case, it is mortified by its superiority in the last.

But this honoured and happy life was drawing to a close. Shortly after the publication of the *Esprit des Loix*, the strength of Montesquieu rapidly declined; it seemed as if nature had been exhausted by that great production. "I had intended," said he in his journal, "to give more extent and depth to some parts of the *Esprit des Loix*, but I have become incapable of it. Reading has weakened my eyes; and it seems as if the little light that still remains to them is but the dawn of the day, when they will close for ever." His anticipations were not long of being fulfilled. In February 1755 he was seized with an inflammatory fever, when on a visit at Paris. The utmost care and attention were bestowed on him by a number of friends, especially the Duc de Nivernois, and the Duchesse d'Aiguillon, two of his oldest; but he sank under the malady at the end of thirteen days. The sweetness of his temper and serenity of his disposition never deserted him during this illness. From the first he was aware of its dangerous nature, but not a groan, a complaint, or a murmur ever escaped his lips. The Jesuits made strenuous endeavours to get possession of him during his last moments; but though strongly impressed with religious principle, he resisted all their efforts to extract from him a declaration in favour of their peculiar tenets. "I have always respected religion," said he; "the morality of the Gospel is the noblest gift ever bestowed by God on man." The Jesuits strenuously urged him to put into their hands a corrected copy of the *Lettres Persannes*, in which he had expunged the passages having an irreligious tendency, but he refused to give it to them. He gave, however, the copy to the Duchesse d'Aiguillon and Madame Dupré de St Maur, who were in the apartment, with instructions for its

publication, saying, "I will sacrifice everything to religion, but nothing to the Jesuits." Shortly after he received extreme unction from the hands of the curé of the parish. "Sir," said the priest, "you now feel how great is God." "Yes," he replied, "and how little man." These were his last words. He died on 10th February 1755.

Montesquieu, like most other men of original thought and extensive observation, left a great number of manuscripts and notes; but they were in so incomplete a state, that a few detached fragments only have been deemed fit for publication. He had written a journal of his travels, and in particular a set of "Notes on England," which would have been of much value had they been worked up to a mature form, but death interrupted him when he was only in the commencement of this great undertaking. He had begun a history of France under Louis XI., which is still extant, though very little progress had been made in the work; the introduction, containing a sketch of the state of Europe at that period, is said to equal the most brilliant picture left by his immortal hand. It is written in the terse, epigrammatic style, which is so characteristic of its author; and a few striking expressions preserved by those who have had access to the manuscript, will convey an idea of what the work would have been. "He saw only," said he, "in the commencement of his reign, the commencement of vengeance." Terminating a parallel of Louis XI. and Richelieu, which he drew much to the advantage of the latter, he observed, "He made the monarch play the second part in the monarchy, but the first in Europe—he lowered the king, but he raised the kingdom." These and similar expressions are in Montesquieu's peculiar and nervous style, and they prove that the work would have contained, if completed, many brilliant passages, but they do not warrant the conclusion that the history itself would have been of much value. There is nothing more dangerous to an historian than great powers of epigrammatic expression; it almost inevitably leads to the sacrifice of truth and candour, to point and antithesis. It is well for Tacitus that we have not the other side of his story recounted by a writer of equal power, but less party spirit, and force of expression. In truth, it is probable the world has not lost much by Mon-

tesquieu's numerous unpublished manuscripts having been left in an incomplete state. There is no end to the writing of romances, or the annals of human events, but there is a very early limit to the production of original ideas, even to the greatest intellects ; to Plato, Bacon, Newton, Smith, or Montesquieu, they are given only in a limited number. Hence the frequent repetition of the same thoughts, when their writings become voluminous. Montesquieu has done enough, his mission to man has been amply fulfilled.

Like all other men whose thoughts have made a great and widespread impression on mankind, the originality and value of Montesquieu's conceptions cannot be rightly appreciated by subsequent ages. That is the consequence of their very originality and importance. They have sunk so deep, and spread so far among mankind, that they have become common, and almost trite. Like the expressions of Shakespeare, Gray, or Milton, they have become household words ; on reading his works as on reading those of our own immortal poets, we are astonished to find how vast a proportion of our habitual thoughts and expressions have sprung from his genius. This, however, far from being a reproach to an author, is his highest commendation ; it demonstrates at once the originality of his thoughts, and the impression they have made on mankind. If we would discover the advance a great man has made, we must recur to the authors in the same line who have preceded him, and then the change appears great indeed. The highest praise which can be bestowed on an author as an original thinker, is to say, that his ideas were unknown to the authors who preceded, trite with those who followed him.

The great characteristic of Montesquieu's thoughts, is the tracing the operation of general and lasting causes on human affairs. Before his time, the march of political or social events was ascribed by divines to the immediate and direct agency of the Deity guiding human actions, as a general moves an army ; by men of the world, to chance, or the mastering influence of individual energy and talent. Bossuet may be considered as the most eminent of the former class ; Voltaire brought the doctrines of the latter to their highest perfection. In opposition to both, Montesquieu strenuously asserted the operation of general laws, emanating doubtless

originally from the institutions of the Deity, and the adaptation of the human mind to the circumstances in which man is placed in society, but acting at subsequent periods through the instrumentality of free agents, and of permanent and lasting operation in all ages of the world. Machiavel had frequently got sight of this sublime theory in his political writings, and in his Discourse on Roman History, many of the most profound observations ever made by man on the working of the human mind under free institutions, and of the corresponding effects of similar principles of action in the republics of antiquity, and of those of Italy in modern times, are to be found. But it was Montesquieu who first carried out the doctrine to its full extent, and traced its operation through an infinity of historical events and political institutions. It is to the success with which he has done this, and the combined philosophical depth and grasp of details which his writings exhibit, that his colossal reputation has been owing. Like all men of original and powerful minds, he had prodigious acquaintance with individual facts, united to the power of classifying them under their proper heads, and deducing from them their general and common principles. Like the steam-engine, he could, by turns, turn a thread round a spindle, and elevate a seventy-four in the air. He was the Kepler of science. Like the immortal German, he had made eighty thousand observations in the social world ; but, like him, he could deduce the few laws of national advance or decline from the regular irregularity of their motions.

The expression, *Esprit des Loix*, selected as the title of Montesquieu's great work, was not happily chosen. What he meant was not the *Spirit of Laws*, but the causes from which laws have arisen ; the "*Leges Legum*," as Cicero said, to which they were owing, and from which they had sprung. He ascribed very little influence to human institutions in moulding the character or determining the felicity of man. On the contrary, he thought that these institutions were in general an effect, not a cause. He conceived that they arose, in every country, from something peculiar in the race from which the nation was descended, or the climate, employments, or mode of earning subsistence to which it was chained in subsequent times by the physical circumstances in which it was

placed. A certain type or character was imprinted on every people, either by the ineradicable influence of blood, which descends to the remotest generations, or the not less irremovable influence of external and physical circumstances which attaches to them through all ages. It was this blood and those circumstances which formed the national character, and through it, in the course of generations, moulded the national customs and institutions. These customs and institutions were those which, having been framed by necessity, or the dictates of expedience, according to the circumstances in which each people were placed, were best adapted to their temper and situation. True wisdom consisted not in altering but in following out the spirit of existing laws and customs; and, in Montesquieu's own words, "No nation ever yet rose to lasting greatness but from institutions in conformity to its spirit." No calamities were so great or irremediable as those which arose from disregarding the separate characters stamped on the different races and nations of men by the hand of the Almighty, or seeking to force upon one people or one race the institutions which have arisen among, and are adapted to another.

Such were the fundamental principles which ran through Montesquieu's writings, and to the elucidation of which he devoted the fifteen best years of his life. It will readily be perceived that they are entirely at variance with the whole doctrines of the French philosophers of the latter part of the eighteenth century,—the doctrines which were practically enforced and carried into effect in their great Revolution. With them institutions were everything; national character, descent, employment, or physical circumstances, nothing. All mankind would be the same if they only enjoyed the same liberty, laws, and institutions. The differences observable among men were entirely the result of the different governments forced upon them, in various stages of their progress, by the tyranny of kings, the force of conquest, or the machinations of priests. One set of institutions, one code of laws, one set of government maxims, were adapted for all the world, and if practically acted upon would everywhere produce the same pure and upright character in the people. Vice and wickedness were the hateful effect of aristocratic pride, kingly lusts, or sacerdotal delusion; the human heart

was naturally innocent, and bent only upon virtue ; when the debasing influence of these corrupters of men was removed, it would universally resume its natural direction. Hence the maxim of Robespierre—"Le peuple est *toujours bon*, le magistrat toujours corruptible." Hence the readiness with which the constitution-mongers at Paris set themselves to prepare skeletons of government for all nations, and the universal identity of these with the one cast from the original mould during the fervour of the Revolution for the Great Nation. Hence also, it may be added, their experienced evils, short duration, and universal sweeping away, within a few years, before the accumulated suffering and aroused indignation of mankind.

It was to this fundamental variance between the doctrines of Montesquieu and those of the greater part of his contemporaries, and nearly the whole generation which succeeded him, that the long obscuring of his fame, and the comparative neglect which his writings for long experienced in France, are to be ascribed. When we contemplate the profound nature of his thoughts, the happy terseness and epigrammatic force of his expressions, and the great early fame which his writings acquired, nothing appears more extraordinary than the subsequent neglect into which, for above half a century after his death, he fell.* Voltaire, Rousseau, Helvetius, Condorcet, Turgot, and the Encyclopedists, were then at the acme of their reputation, and their doctrines as to the natural innocence of man, and the universal moulding of human character by political institutions, not that of political institutions by human character, were too much at variance with Montesquieu's deductions and conclusions to admit of their co-existing together. The experience of the Revolution, both abroad and at home, however, ere long spread a doubt among many thinking men, whether these doctrines were in reality as well founded as they were universally represented to be by the philosophers of the preceding age. Napoleon, who was thoroughly convinced of their erroneous nature, had a high admiration for Montesquieu, and frequently quoted his sentiments. But still

* "No one now thinks of reading Montesquieu," said the Marquis of Mirabeau, author of *L'ami des Hommes*, a distinguished Economist, and father of the great Mirabeau, to the King of Sweden, in 1772, at Paris.—*See Biog. Univ.* xxix. 89.

the opposite set of opinions, diffused over the world with the tricolor flag, maintains its ground with the great majority even of well-informed men, at least in all republican states and constitutional monarchies. The policy of England, in encouraging the revolutions of Belgium, Portugal, Spain, and the South American republics, has, for the last thirty years, been mainly founded on the principle, that institutions similar to those of Britain may with safety be transferred to other states, and that it is among them alone that we are to look for durable alliances or cordial support. The wretched fate of all the countries strangers to the Anglo-Saxon blood, which have been cursed with these alien constitutions, whether in the Spanish or Italian Peninsulas, or the South American states, the total failure of English institutions in Ireland, have had no effect with the great majority of men in this country in rooting out these fatal errors. More than one generation, it is apparent, must descend to their graves, before they are fairly expelled from general thought by experience and suffering. So obstinately do men cling to doctrines in opposition alike to the dictates of wisdom and the lessons of experience, which are flattering to human vanity; and so true in all ages is the doctrine of the Roman Catholic church, that pride is the last sin which can be conquered in the human heart.

One remarkable instance will illustrate the manner in which Montesquieu supported the opposite principles, that institutions are moulded by the character and circumstances of nations, and are not the moulder of them. It is well known that primogeniture, though neither the law of succession in the Roman empire, nor originally that of the nations of northern Europe, in whom the *allodial* customs at first generally prevailed, came to be universally introduced with the feudal system, and the thorough establishment of a military aristocracy in every country of Europe. But, strange to say, there are some places where the rule is just the reverse, and the *youngest* son succeeds in boroughs to the whole estate of the father as is the custom of some boroughs in England.*

* This is still the case in some parts of England according to the custom called Borough-English, (BLACKSTONE, ii. 93.) Duhelde mentions that a similar rule of descent prevails among some of the Tartar tribes whom he visited on the frontiers of China—a curious indication of the justice of Montesquieu's speculation as to its origin.

Montesquieu ascribes—and apparently with reason—these opposite rules of succession to a similar feeling of expedience and necessity in the different circumstances in which the same race of Northmen were placed in different periods of their progress. The succession of the youngest son to the father's estate was the bequest of the patriarchal ages, when the youngest son generally remained last at home with his aged father, his elder brothers having previously hived off with their herds and flocks. He therefore naturally succeeded to the moveables of which he was alone in possession, jointly with his father, at the latter's death. Another illustration of the same origin of laws from circumstances has been furnished from the East in later times. It is observed by Michaud, in his very interesting *Travels in the East*, that in several islands of the Archipelago *the daughters alone inherit*, alike in land and moveables—a custom which has existed from the earliest times, and arose from the ease with which a livelihood could be earned by the sons of a family in nautical pursuits, and the impossibility of the daughters making their bread in the same way.*

On the other hand, the descent of the whole landed estate to the eldest son, to the exclusion of his younger brothers and sisters, was naturally suggested by the settlement of a brave and martial race of conquerors in extensive districts won by their valour, and who could be maintained only in the lands they had won by the sword. To divide the estate in such circumstances of peril was to expose it to certain destruction; unity of operation in all its forms, one head, one castle, was as indispensable as one general to an army, or one sovereign to a kingdom. The old maxim, "*Divide et Impera*," was universally felt to be of fearful application. Empires, duchies, principalities, earldoms, baronies, private estates, could alone be preserved entire, amidst the general hostility with which all were surrounded, by descending to a single occupant. That occupant was naturally the eldest son, the first-born of the family, the first who arrived at man's estate, and the most capable on that account to render the necessary protection to its various members and dependants. Hence the general establishment of the law of primogeniture in all the countries of Europe. And for a

* See MICHAUD, *Voyages dans l'Orient*, iii. 475.

similar reason, when the necessity which at first occasioned this general deviation from the feelings of equal affection to offspring was removed by the establishment of regular government and general security, and the spread of commerce, with the necessity of capital to fit out sons and daughters, had been generally felt, this custom was silently abrogated, at least in the commercial and middle classes, and a division of the succession, whether in land or money, into nearly equal parts, very generally took place.

It may readily be inferred from these observations, that the doctrine of Montesquieu, as to the moulding of institutions and the character of nations by external circumstances, not of the character of nations by institutions and forms of government, is one of the very highest importance, not merely to speculative philosophers, but to practical statesmen. In truth, it is the question of questions ; the one thing needful to be understood both by the leaders of thought and the rulers of men. Unless correct and rational views are entertained on this subject, internal legislation will be perpetually at fault, external policy in a false direction. Reform will degenerate into revolution, conquest into desolation. The greatest calamities, both social and foreign, recorded in the history of the last half century, have arisen from a neglect of the maxims of Montesquieu, as to the indelible influence of race and external circumstances on human character, and the adoption in their stead of the doctrines of Voltaire and Rousseau, as to the paramount effect of political institutions and general education on human felicity. Our policy, both social and foreign, is still mainly founded on the latter basis. If Montesquieu's principles, as to no nation ever arriving at durable greatness but by institutions in harmony with its spirit and origin, had been generally adopted, the French Revolution, which originated in the Anglo and American mania, and the desire to transplant English institutions into the soil of France, would never have taken place. Had the same views prevailed in the British cabinet, the iniquitous support of the revolt of the South American colonies in 1821 and 1822, and the insidious encouragement of the ruinous revolutions of Spain and Portugal, during the Carlist war, would not have stained the honour of England, and ruined the prospects of

the Peninsula. Had they pervaded the British community, the two fatal mistakes of policy in our time—the sudden emancipation of the negro slaves in the West Indies, and the unloosing all the bonds of government in Ireland by the transplantation of Anglo-Saxon institutions, and the tempered freedom of England, into the midst of the Celtic blood and semi-barbarous passions of Ireland—would never have been committed. The great question at issue, in short, between Montesquieu and the Encyclopedists, as to whether man is moulded by institutions, or institutions by man, is the fundamental question, not only speculative, but practical, of the age; and the one without correct ideas on which internal legislation and external policy are equally certain to be precipitated into error, and benevolence itself to become the parent of unbounded calamities.

And yet, if the matter be considered dispassionately, and without the disturbing influence of human pride and democratic ambition, which has obscured the visions of three generations of the ablest men in Europe, it seems extraordinary how any doubt could ever have been entertained on the subject. What are laws and institutions but the work of men, the concentration of the national will in times past, or at the present moment? If so, how *could* they have arisen but from the will of the people? It is only removing the difficulty a step further back to say, as has so often been done, that they were imposed, not by the will of the nation, but by the power of the tyrants who had oppressed, or the priests who had deluded it. For what were these tyrants or these priests? Not one in twenty thousand to the whole community. If they were empowered and enabled to impose arbitrary or debasing institutions, it must have been because the immense majority devolved on them the task; because, conscious of inability to govern themselves, or wanting the inclination to do so, that majority willingly resigned itself to the guidance and direction of others. The Czar at St Petersburg, the Sultaun at Constantinople, the Emperor at Pekin, reign just as much by the national will, and in a manner just as conformable to the national wish, as the consuls of Rome, the Committee of Public Salvation at Paris, or the present constitutional monarchs of France or England. The proof of this is, that when the people

are dissatisfied with their administration, or displeased with the sovereign, they have no difficulty in despatching him. The twisting of a sash round the neck in Russia, the bow-string in Constantinople or Ispahan, are very effectual monitors—fully as much so as a hostile majority in the House of Commons or the Chamber of Deputies. In a word, government in every country being conducted by the few over the many, by the hundreds over the hundred thousands, it is altogether impossible that the administration or institutions can be, for any length of time, at variance with the general will; because, if it were so, it would not be submitted to. It may be, indeed, despotic and tyrannical in the highest degree, but that is no indication that it is contrary to the general will; it is only an indication that the general will is to be slaves—no unusual occurrence among men.

A striking instance of the erroneous manner in which men have long reasoned on this subject, has been afforded in the British empire. Scotland and Ireland, as all the world knows, are now incorporated with England; but the mode of their union was different. The former became united with its more powerful neighbour, by the Scottish monarch ascending the English throne; the latter by conquest, in the beginning of the twelfth century, by Henry II. The antagonists of Montesquieu, and supporters of the principles of the French Revolution that institutions and government are all in all, have eagerly seized on this remarkable example, and triumphantly pointed to the vast difference in the past character and history, and the present condition of Scotland and Ireland, as affording decisive evidence of the all-powerful influence of government and institutions on national fortunes and social happiness. The Irish malcontents, with O'Connell at their head, have loudly joined in the same chorus, and repeated *ad nauseam*, that all the miseries of the Emerald Isle have been owing to seven hundred years of oppression by England. But a little reflection must show, not only that this example affords no countenance to the doctrine that government and institutions make men, but that it demonstrates precisely the reverse.

Ireland, it is said, has been conquered by England;

Scotland has not: thence the difference in their national character and present condition. It may be so. But what caused the one to be vanquished, and the other to maintain its independence? How has it happened that, while Ireland was conquered by eleven hundred men-at-arms and two thousand archers, led by Henry II., and has never since made any serious, far less successful effort to regain its independence, Scotland hurled back, not once but twenty times, the whole force of England's invasion, and inflicted on its power the greatest defeat recorded in its long annals? How did it happen that, from the days of Wallace and Bruce downwards, Scotland, though invaded and pierced to the heart twenty times by armies of sixty and eighty thousand Englishmen, yet succeeded in always repelling them in the end, and at length united on equal terms with its powerful neighbour; while Ireland was not only so easily subjugated, but retained in subjection, that, even so far down as the days of Elizabeth, we learn from Hume that a garrison of *a thousand men* was deemed, in ordinary times, sufficient to keep it in subjection?*

It could not be that Scotland possessed greater physical resources, or was more difficult of external conquest by England than Ireland. The fact is notoriously the reverse. Scotland never possessed a third of the population of Ireland. At this moment there are between eight and nine millions in the latter country, and not much above two millions and a half in the former. Scotland contains five millions of arable acres, and twelve millions of mountain and wastes; Ireland just the reverse—twelve millions of arable acres, and five millions of mountain and wastes. Scotland was accessible to the largest armies from England without crossing the sea; Ireland could only be reached from Great Britain by the costly and difficult method of maritime expeditions. The morasses and hills of Ireland were to the full as defensible as those of Scotland to the south of the Grampian range, where the battle of independence was exclusively fought. Ireland, therefore, had triple the population and physical resources of Scotland, and a territory at least as defensible. How, then, did it happen that Ireland was with ease conquered by a thousand men-at-arms

* Hume, iv. 117.

and two thousand archers; while Scotland, twenty times over, expelled sixty and eighty thousand men from her territory? Original difference of character, the peculiarities of the Celtic race, want of the perseverance and energy of the Anglo-Saxon blood, can alone explain so remarkable a difference. Conquest and subsequent misgovernment, of which so much has been said, was an effect, not a cause. Tacitus has unfolded the real cause of the different history of the Irish and Caledonians. “Saepe ex eo (Agricola) audiui, legione unâ et modicis auxiliis, debellari obtinerique Hiberniam posse.”* In the Caledonian war, the same author recounts the battle with Galgacus. The same peculiarity has characterised the Irish in every phase of their history. Unlike the Scotch, who have become the rivals of the English in art as formerly they were their equals in arms, the Irish have gained nothing in subsequent times by their close vicinity to Great Britain, the workshop of the globe. No amalgamation, little communication of improvement, has taken place between them. The native Irish of the original race, who now clamour for a Repeal of the Union, have shown themselves as incapable of receiving civilisation as they were of repelling conquest. They are as unfit for self-government as they are unequal to national independence.†

This fundamental principle of Montesquieu's, as to the perpetual and ineradicable influence of race, climate, and physical circumstances, in forming national character and moulding national institutions, is unquestionably the true doctrine on the subject; though probably several generations must pass away, and an incalculable amount of suffering be endured by mankind, before it is generally admitted. Coupled with the cardinal point of the Christian faith, the inherent and *universal* corruption of the human heart, it forms the only foundation of a salutary or durable government. Decisive proof of this may be found in the fact, that the revolutionary party, all the world over, maintain directly the reverse, viz.—that free political institutions, and general education, are all in all; and that, if established, the native

* TACITUS, *Agricola*, c. 24.

† Observe, “Of the original race.” The mixed Irish and Anglo-Saxon race, or the descendants of the English settlers, will yield to none in the world in genius, courage, and energy.

virtue of the human heart affords a sufficient guarantee for general happiness. Montesquieu's principles lead to the conclusion that all reform and amelioration of existing institutions, to be either durable or beneficial, must be moulded on the old precedents, and deviate as little as may be, and that only from obvious necessity or expedience, from them. They utterly repudiate all transplantation of constitutions, or forcing upon one people the institutions or privileges of another. They point to experience as the great and only sure guide in social or political change ; and for the obvious reason, that it alone can tell what has been found to be suitable to the circumstances, and adapted to the character and wants of the people. It is not that our ancestors were in the least wiser than we are ; doubtless they did many foolish things as we do. It is that time has consigned their foolish things, whether laws or measures, to the grave ; and nothing has descended to our time but those institutions which have been found to be beneficial in their tendency. The portions of our present legislation which are suitable to the country will, in like manner, descend to posterity ; and the folly and absurdity which we share with our predecessors will, in a few generations after their effects have been experienced, be heard of no more.

It has been already remarked, that the *Grandeur et Décadence des Romains* is a more complete, and, in some respects, profounder work, than the *Esprit des Loix*. A few quotations will justify, it is thought, this high eulogium :—

“ The circumstance, of all others, which contributed most to the *ultimate* greatness of Rome, was the long-continued wars in which its people were early involved. The Italian people had no machines for conducting sieges ; and, in addition to this, as the soldiers everywhere served without pay, it was impossible to retain them long before a fortified town : thus few of their wars were decisive. They fought for the pillage of a camp, or the booty of the fields, after which victors and vanquished retired alike into their respective cities. It was this circumstance which occasioned the long resistance of the Italian cities, and, at the same time, the obstinacy of the Romans in their endeavours to subjugate them ; it was that which gave them victories which did not enervate, and conquests which left them their poverty. Had they rapidly conquered the neighbouring cities, they would have arrived at their decline before the days of Pyrrhus, of the Gauls, and of Hannibal ; and, following the destiny of all the nations in the world, they would *too quickly* have gone through the transition from poverty to riches, and from riches to corruption.”—Chap. 1.

What a subject for reflection is presented in this single paragraph ! Rome, without any knowledge of siege equip-

age placed in the midst of the Italian states, bristling with strongholds ; and slowly learning, during centuries of indecisive warfare, and after calamitous contests, that military art by which they were afterwards to subdue the world ! It was in like manner in the long, bloody, and equally balanced contests of the Grecian republics with each other that the discipline was acquired which gave Alexander and the Macedonian Phalanx the empire of Asia ; and in the protracted contests of the Anglo-Saxons, first with each other, in the Heptarchy, and then with the Danes and Normans, in defence of their coasts, that the foundation was laid of the energy and perseverance which has given the British race their present eminence, their long-continued dominion among men.

“It has been often observed,” says Montesquieu, “that our armies generally melt away under the fatigue of the soldiers, while those of the Romans never failed to preserve their health by it. The reason is, that their fatigues were *continuous* ; whereas our soldiers are destroyed by passing from a life of almost total inactivity to one of vehement exertion—the thing of all others most destructive to health. Not only were the Roman soldiers trained, during war, to incessant marching and fortifying of the camps, but in peace they were daily inured to the same active habits. They were all accustomed to the military step—that is, to march twenty miles, and sometimes twenty-four, in five hours. They did this bearing burdens of sixty pounds. They were daily trained to run and leap with their whole equipment on ; in their ordinary drills, the swords, javelins, and arrows were of a weight double of that used in war, and the exercises were continuous.”—Chap. 2.

There can be no doubt that this passage both explains much of the astonishing conquests of the Roman legions, and furnishes ample subject for reflection to a modern observer. The constant employment of these troops in the construction of great public works, as high-ways, bridges, harbours, or the like, was at once the best security for the health of the soldiers, and the circumstance, of all others, which rendered their maintenance tolerable to the people. If we examine the inscriptions found in all parts of the world where Roman remains are to be met with, we shall find that they almost all were raised by the hands of the legions. It was their persevering and incessant toil which formed the magnificent highways, which, emanating from the Roman towns, extended to the furthest extremities of the empire. The incessant toil required for these great undertakings ; the vast bridges and viaducts which required to be

constructed ; the mountains to be levelled ; the morasses and valleys to be filled up,—habituated the legionary soldiers to such an amount of daily labour, that their engaging in the fatigues of a campaign was felt rather as a recreation than a burden. Hence, the dreadful sickness which in modern armies invariably attends the commencement of a campaign, and in general halves its numerical strength, was for the most part unknown ; and hence, too, the extraordinary achievements performed by small bodies of these iron veterans. How great the difference in modern times, where the naval and military forces are everywhere kept up during peace in almost total idleness ; and the consequence is, that they are at once an eyesore to the citizens whose substance they consume, in what is deemed useless ostentation, and are deprived of half their numerical strength, and more than half their efficiency, on first engaging in the fatigues of real warfare.

No province in modern times hails the arrival of a division of troops ; no seaport longs for the presence of a man-of-war, as the signal for the commencement of great and beneficent pacific undertakings, as was the case in the Roman empire. Of what incalculable use might the British navy be, if even a part of it was employed in transporting the hundred thousand colonists, who annually seek in our distant possessions, or the American States, that profitable market for their industry, which they cannot find amidst our crowded manufactories at home ! And this is an instance of the manner in which the reflections of Montesquieu, though made in reference only to the Roman empire, are in truth applicable to all ages and countries,—as the parables in the Gospels, though delivered only to the fishermen of Judea, contain the rules of conduct for the human race to the end of the world.

Regarding the comparative causes of corruption, in a military and a commercial state, Montesquieu makes the following observation. Let him, who feels it not applicable to this nation and ourselves, throw the first stone.

“ Carthage having become richer than Rome, was also more corrupted. For this reason, while at Rome public employments were chiefly awarded to ability and virtue, and conferred no advantage, but a greater share of fatigues to be endured and dangers incurred,—everything which the public had to bestow was sold at Carthage, and *every service rendered by individuals*

was paid by the state. The tyranny of a prince does not bring a despotic state nearer its ruin than indifference to the public good does a republic. The advantage of a free state consists in this, that its revenues are in general better administered, and even where this is not the case, it has at least the advantage of not being governed by favourites. But, on the other hand, the corrupting power in a democracy, when once brought into action, ere long becomes more dissolving than in a despotism; for instead of paying court merely to the friends and relations of the prince, it becomes necessary to provide for the friends and relations of the multitude, who have a share in political power. All is then lost. The laws are eluded in a more dangerous manner than by the violence of a despot; for they are so by the interests of the changing many, not by the passions of one, whose position at the head of the state being fixed and unchangeable, gives him a lasting interest in its preservation."—Chap. 4.

How many reflections does this passage, written in France above a century ago, awaken in the breast of a British citizen at this time! * So true it is, that real political truth belongs to no age or locality—"non alia Romæ, alia Athenis:" it is of eternal application, and is destined to receive confirmation from the experience of men and the lessons of history to the end of the world.

"Powers," says Montesquieu, "which owe their greatness to commerce, may exist long in mediocrity, but their grandeur can never be of long duration. The reason is, that they rise to greatness by little and little, without any one being aware of their growth, as they have done nothing which attracts attention, awakens alarm, or indicates their power. But when it has risen to that point, that no one can avoid seeing it, all the surrounding nations secretly endeavour to deprive the great commercial state of advantages which they all envy, and which have taken them, as it were, by surprise."—Chap. 4.

Few persons who contemplate the present state of the British empire, its astonishing rise to greatness in the space of less than a century—the general, it may be said, universal jealousy with which it is regarded, and the perilous pinnacle on which it now stands, will deny the justice of this observation. May the remark as to the short duration of power founded on such a basis, not receive an additional and ever memorable confirmation in ourselves! But one thing is perfectly clear; this remark strikes at the possibility of conciliating the adjoining and poorer states, while our commercial superiority continues, and thus strikes at the very foundation of the reciprocity system, on which

* It was stated by the Ministers of Louis Napoleon, as the chief cause of the immense expenditure, amounting to £70,000,000 annually, with which the French Republic after the Revolution of 1848 was burdened, that no service was done in the state by any of the innumerable *employés* of Government that was not paid for; while in England, great part was gratuitous. The very peculiarities which Montesquieu observed in Carthage and Rome.

our whole commercial policy for the last quarter of a century has been founded. That system proceeds on the principle, that by opening to the adjoining states a fair communication of advantages, it is possible for a great commercial power, not only to conciliate their good-will, but to obtain with them a great and mutually beneficial mercantile intercourse. Montesquieu's observation points to the undying and universal jealousy with which such a power is surrounded, and the futility of all attempts, while its superiority exists, to avert the mercantile hostility of foreign states, or preserve with them any considerable commercial traffic. Which is the better opinion, let the hedge of hostile tariffs with which, after boundless concessions to purchase commercial good-will, we are surrounded in every direction, give the answer.

On the comparative value of infantry and cavalry in war, Montesquieu, though no professional soldier, makes the following observation, on which those who are so would do well to ponder :—

“The Carthaginian cavalry was superior to that of the Romans, for two reasons. One was, that the Numidian and Spanish horses were better than those of Italy ; the other, that the Roman cavalry was ill armed ; for Polybius tells us, that it was not till they had carried on war in Greece that they changed their manner of equipping that limb of military strength. In the first Punic war, Regulus was beat as soon as the Carthaginians made choice of plains for combat, where their cavalry could act to advantage ; in the second, Hannibal owed to the Numidian horse his principal victories. It was not till whole corps of them began to go over to the Romans in Italy, that the latter began to breathe. Scipio having conquered Spain, and contracted an alliance with Massinissa, deprived the Carthaginians of that advantage. He did more : he gained it for himself. It was the Numidian cavalry which gained the battle of Zama, and terminated the war in favour of the Romans.”—Chap. 4.

It is impossible to read the admirable account of Hannibal's campaign in the last volume of Arnold's *History of Rome*, without perceiving that this observation, as to the decisive effect of the Numidian cavalry upon the fortunes of the war, in first giving victory to the Carthaginians when these troops were entirely on their side, and gradually and at length decisively restoring it to that of the Romans when they were won over to their eagles, is entirely well founded. Napoleon was of the same opinion, and has repeatedly expressed it in various parts of his works. “Give me,” said that great man, “the French infantry and the Mameluke horse, and I will conquer the world.” It was his constant

affirmation that cavalry, equally brave and skilfully led, should always overthrow infantry; and that the contrary opinion which generally prevails, was owing to horse, considered as the sole strength of war during the feudal ages, having been unduly decried since the invention of firearms. All the world knows the immense use he made of his heavy cavalry in all his campaigns; how often, in circumstances the most critical, it chained victory to his standards; how nearly it re-established his affairs, and replaced the imperial crown upon his head on the field of Waterloo. How striking a proof of human sagacity that the philosophic sage, in the early part of the seventeenth century, should have divined a truth which the researches of the historian and the exploits of the conqueror were to confirm in the middle of the eighteenth!

“Those who are governed by a king,” says Montesquieu, “are less tormented by envy and jealousy than those who live under a hereditary aristocracy. The prince is so far distant from his subjects, that he is rarely seen by them; he is so far above them that nothing in his situation can mortify their self-love. But the nobles who govern in an aristocracy are under the eyes of all; and they are not so elevated, but that odious comparisons are made without ceasing. Thus in all ages we have seen the people detest their senators, though they frequently love their king. Republics, where birth confers no title to power, are in that respect in a better situation than aristocracies; for the people feel less jealousy of an authority which they give to whom they please, and take from whom they incline.”—Chap. 8.

How many confirmations of this remark have the history of France during the Revolution, and of England during the Reform mania, afforded! And this affords an illustration of a truth which, the more history is studied, will be rendered more apparent—viz., that the principles which lie at the bottom of the greatest changes in the political world, and produce the most devastating evils to society, are in reality the same which we see acting every day around us in common life. In the jealousies of the tea-table, the animosities of the market-place, the envy of trade, we may see the passions working which, infused into a whole people, tear society in pieces. It is only supposing the same malevolent or selfish desires working in every breast, directed against one object, and rendered irresistible from that very multiplication, and we have the envy of the coterie transformed into the fury of revolution. Whoever

will closely observe the working of that mainspring of human actions—selfishness—on the society, whether in a village, a city, a country, or a metropolis in which he resides, will have no difficulty in discerning the real but secret, and therefore unobserved, spring of the greatest changes that ever occur in the political and social world.

On the division of the Roman people into centuries and tribes, which was the cardinal point of their constitution, Montesquieu makes the following important observation:—

“Servius Tullius was the author of the famous division of the people into centuries, which Livy and Dionysius Halicarnassus have so well described. He distributed a hundred and ninety-three centuries into six classes, and put the whole lower people into the last century, which singly formed the sixth class. It is easy to see that that arrangement virtually excluded the lower classes from the suffrage, not *de jure*, but *de facto*. Subsequently it was agreed, that except in some particular cases they should, in voting, follow the division into tribes. There were thirty-five of these tribes who gave each their vote: *four were from the city, thirty-one from the country*. The principal citizens, being all rural proprietors, were naturally classed in the country tribes: the lower people were all massed together in the four urban ones. This circumstance was regarded, and with reason, as the salvation of the republic. Appius Claudius had distributed the lower people among the whole tribes, but Fabius classed them again in the four urban ones, and thence acquired the surname of ‘Maximus.’ The Censors every five years took a survey of the citizens, and distributed the people in the tribes to which they legally belonged; so that the ambitious could not render themselves masters of their suffrages, nor the people abuse their own power.”—Chap. 8.

The Romans had good reason for styling that Fabius “Maximus,” who discovered this way of preventing the lower classes, by their number, from acquiring an overwhelming superiority in the government of the state. He achieved as great a good for his country, by so doing, as by baffling Hannibal after the battle of Cannæ. But for that circumstance, the Roman constitution would have become, after the change of Appius Claudius, a mere prototype of the American democracy; a government constantly swayed by a numerical majority of the lowest class of citizens. There can be no doubt that the matter at issue, in this question, is the most material which can engage the attention of political philosophers and statesmen in a free country, and that, on the determination of it, its ultimate fate is entirely dependant. So great is the number of the working-classes in every old and opulent community, compared to those who possess the advantages of property and superior education, that nothing is more certain than that, if the elective fran-

chise be widely diffused, and no mode of classifying the votes, as at Rome, has been discovered, the sway of a numerical majority of incompetent electors will, ere long, become irresistible. Certain ruin then awaits the State. It was that which ruined Athens in ancient, which has destroyed Poland in modern times, and which is fast undermining the foundations of the social union in America. The Roman method of giving every citizen a vote, but classifying them in such a way that the paramount influence of a mere numerical majority was prevented, and the practical direction of affairs was thrown into the hands of the better class of citizens, though not free from objection, is the most perfect method of combining universal suffrage in the citizens, with the real direction of affairs by those fitted to conduct them, which the wit of man has ever divined.

In truth, it deserves consideration by those who think on human affairs, and the probable form of government which may be expected to prevail in future among men, whether *universal* suffrage is the real evil to be dreaded, and whether *equality* of suffrage is not the real poison which destroys society. Abstractly considered, there is much justice in the plea so constantly advanced by the working-classes, that, being members of the community, and contributing to its support or opulence by their labour, they are entitled to a certain voice in the direction of its affairs. If no one has a voice at all but the sovereign—as in a despotism,—or no one except a few magnates—as in an aristocracy,—the humbler classes cannot complain at least of inconsistency, whatever they may of injustice, if they are excluded. But if a vast body of electors, as in Great Britain, is admitted, and still the great bulk of the working-classes is excluded, it is not easy to see on what principle the exclusion of some can be rendered consistent with the admission of others. It deserves consideration whether the true principle would not be to give every able-bodied working man, major and not receiving parochial relief, a vote, but a *vote of much less weight than his superiors in intelligence, property, or station*. This might be done either as the Romans did it, by making the votes be taken by centuries, and classing all the votes of the poorer electors in a limited number of centuries, or giving each man a *personal* vote, and giving the holders

of property, in addition, more votes for their property,—as one for every pound of direct taxes paid. Louis XVI. proposed a plan of this sort to Turgot before the Revolution ; but that minister, deeply imbued with the principles of democracy, rejected it ; and Necker, following out his views, practically established universal suffrage. Possibly the plan, if adopted and honestly carried into execution, might have prevented the whole calamities of the Revolution.

Of the dangers of such a multiplication of votes without any restriction, Roman history affords a memorable example.

“Rome,” says Montesquieu, “had conquered the world with the aid of the Italian cities, and, in return, she had communicated to them a great variety of privileges. At first, they cared little for these advantages ; but when the right of Roman citizenship was that of universal empire, when no one was anything in the world if he was not a Roman citizen, and with that little he was everything, the Italian people resolved to perish or acquire that envied distinction. Being unable to attain this object by prayers and remonstrances, they had recourse to arms : the whole allies on the Eastern coast of the Peninsula revolted, those on the Western side were about to follow their example. Rome, obliged to combat, as it were, the hands by which it had conquered the world, was lost ; it was about to be reduced to its walls, when it extricated itself from the difficulty by extending the privilege to the allies who had remained faithful, and, shortly after, to the whole.

“From that moment, Rome ceased to be a city of which the people had the same spirit, the same interest, the same love of freedom, the same reverence for the Senate. The people of Italy having become citizens, every town brought thither its dispositions, its separate interests, its dependence on some neighbouring protector. The city, torn with divisions, formed no longer a whole ; and as the vast majority of the citizens were so only by a species of fiction, had neither the same magistrates, the same walls, the same temples, the same gods, nor the same places of sepulture, Rome was no longer seen with the same eyes ; the undivided love of country was gone ; Rome was no more. The inhabitants of whole provinces and cities were brought up to the capital to give their suffrages, or compel others to give them ; the popular assemblies degenerated into vast conspiracies ; a troop or seditious band usurped the sacred name of *Comitia* ; the authority of the people, their laws, even themselves, became a mere chimera ; and the anarchy rose to such a point, that it became impossible to tell whether the people had made an ordinance or had not. Writers are never tired of descanting on the divisions which ruined Rome ; but they have not seen that those divisions always existed, and ever must exist, in a free community. It was solely the greatness of the republic which was the cause of the evil, by changing popular tumults into civil wars. Faction was unavoidable in Rome ; its warriors, so fierce, so proud, so terrible abroad, would not be moderate at home. To expect, in a free state, men at once bold in war and timid in peace, is to look for an impossibility. It may be assumed as a fixed principle, that wherever you see every one tranquil in a state which bears the name of a republic, liberty there has been long since extinct.”—Chap. 9.

The representative system has saved Great Britain and America from these terrible popular *comitia*, in which, as

Montesquieu has truly said, the mobs of the people became the convulsions of an empire ; and which tore in pieces Poland in modern, as they had done Rome in ancient times. But does not the real evil exist, despite this liberation from the actual tumult, in the representative government of a great empire, as much as in the stormy *comitia* of an overgrown republic ? It is not the mere strife in the streets, and the shedding of blood in civil warfare, bad as it is, and truly as the “*bellum plusquam civile*” exceeds all others in horror, which is the only evil. The separation of interests, the disregard of common objects in the struggle for individual elevation, the tyranny *over one class by another*, is the thing which really dissolves the national bonds in every widespread and free community. We see this source of discord operating with as much force in the divided representation of great popular states, as in the bloody contests of the Roman forum or of the plain of Volo in Poland. The nullification of South Carolina, the obnoxious tariff of America, the fierce demands for the repeal of the union in Ireland, the sacrifice of agricultural and producing, to commercial and moneyed interests in Great Britain, prove that these evils are in full operation among ourselves, as well as among our descendants on the other side of the Atlantic. Providence has a sure way to punish the selfishness and presumption of men who seek to build up a Babel of human construction ; and that is, to leave them to the consequences of their own extravagance.

The style of Montesquieu may be judged from the extracts, few and imperfect as they are, given in the preceding pages. It is not vehement, eloquent, or forcible ; but condensed, nervous, and epigrammatic. Few writers have furnished to succeeding times so many brilliant passages to quote ; but there are many who can be read *en suite* with more satisfaction. This is not unfrequently the case with writers on philosophical subjects of the highest class of intellect ; and it arises from the variety and originality of their ideas. The mind of the reader is fatigued by following out the multitude of thoughts which their works engender. At the end of almost every paragraph, you involuntarily close the book, to reflect on the subjects of meditation which it has presented. The same peculiarity

may be remarked in the annals of Tacitus, the essays of Bacon, the poetry of Milton, the *Inferno* of Dante, the *Discorsi* of Machiavel. In the habit of expansion which has arisen in more recent times from the multiplication of books, the profits made by writing, and the necessity of satisfying the craving of a voracious public for something new, is to be found the cause of the remarkable difference in the modes of composition which has since become prevalent. What has been gained, however, in animation and fervour, has too often been lost in thought; and it may be doubted whether, among the many writers of the present day, either in Great Britain or the Continent, there is one whose works, a century hence, will be deemed to contain as much of original and valuable ideas as even the preceding sketch, imperfect as it is, has presented in Montesquieu.

HOMER, DANTE, AND MICHAEL ANGELO

[BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, JANUARY 1845]

THERE is something inexpressibly striking, it may almost be said awful, in the fame of HOMER. Three thousand years have elapsed since the bard of Chios began to pour forth his strains ; and their reputation, so far from declining, is on the increase. Successive nations are employed in celebrating his works ; generation after generation of men are fascinated by his imagination. Discrepancies of race, of character, of institutions, of religion, of age of the world, are forgotten in the common worship of his genius. In this universal tribute of gratitude, modern Europe vies with remote antiquity, the light Frenchman with the volatile Greek, the impassioned Italian with the enthusiastic German, the sturdy Englishman with the unconquerable Roman, the aspiring Russian with the proud American. Seven cities, in ancient times, competed for the honour of having given him birth, but seventy nations have since been moulded by his productions. He gave a mythology to the ancients ; he has given the fine arts to the modern world. Jupiter, Saturn, Mars, Minerva, are still household words in every tongue ; Vulcan is yet the god of fire, Neptune of the ocean, Venus of love. Juno is still our companion on moorland solitudes ; Hector the faithful guardian of our flocks and homes. The highest praise yet bestowed on valour is drawn from a comparison to the god of war ; the most grateful compliment to beauty, that she is encircled by the cestus of Venus. When Canova strove to embody his conceptions of heroism or loveliness, he portrayed the heroes of the *Iliad*. Flaxman's genius was elevated to the highest point in embodying its events. Epic poets, in subsequent

times, have done little more than imitate his machinery, copy his characters, adopt his similes, and, in a few instances, improve upon his descriptions. Painting and statuary, for two thousand years, have been employed in striving to portray, by the pencil or the chisel, his yet breathing conceptions. Language and thought themselves have been moulded by the influence of his poetry. Images of wrath are still taken from Achilles, of pride from Agamemnon, of astuteness from Ulysses, of patriotism from Hector, of tenderness from Andromache, of age from Nestor. The galleys of Rome were, the line-of-battle ships of France and England still are, called after his heroes. The Agamemnon long bore the flag of Nelson; the Bellerophon combated the gigantic l'Orient at the battle of the Nile; the Polyphemus was the third in the British line which entered the cannonade of Copenhagen; the Ajax perished by the flames within sight of the tomb of the Telamonian hero, on the shores of the Hellespont; the Achilles was blown up at the battle of Trafalgar. Alexander the Great ran round the tomb of Achilles before undertaking the conquest of Asia. It was the boast of Napoleon that his mother reclined on tapestry representing the heroes of the *Iliad*, when he was brought into the world. The greatest poets of ancient and modern times have spent their lives in the study of his genius or the imitation of his works. The Drama of Greece was but an amplification of the disasters of the heroes of the *Iliad* on their return from Troy. The genius of Racine, Voltaire, and Corneille, has been mainly exerted in arraying them in the garb of modern times. Parnassus is still the emblem of poetry; Olympus of the council-seat of supreme power; Ida and the Cyprian Isle, of the goddess of love. The utmost exertion of all the arts combined on the opera stage is devoted to represent the rival goddesses as they appeared to the son of Priam on the summit of Gargarus. Withdraw from subsequent poetry the images, mythology, and characters of the *Iliad*, and what would remain? Petrarch spent his best years in restoring his verses. Tasso portrayed the siege of Jerusalem, and the shock of Europe and Asia, almost exactly as Homer has done the contest of the same forces, on the same shores, 3000 years before. Milton's old age, when blind

and poor, was solaced by hearing the verses recited of the poet, to whose conceptions his own mighty spirit had been so much indebted ; and Pope deemed himself fortunate in devoting his life to the translation of the *Iliad* ; and the unanimous voice of ages has confirmed his celebrated lines,—

“Be Homer’s works your study and delight,
Read them by day, and meditate by night ;
Thence form your judgment, thence your maxims bring,
And trace the Muses upward to their spring.” *

No writer in modern times has equalled the widespread fame of the Grecian bard ; but it may be doubted whether, in the realms of thought, and in sway over the reflecting world, the influence of DANTE has not been almost as considerable. Little more than five hundred years, indeed, have elapsed—but a sixth of the thirty centuries which have tested the strength of the Grecian patriarch—since the immortal Florentine poured forth his divine conceptions ; but yet there is scarcely a writer of eminence since that time, in works even bordering on imagination, in which traces of his genius are not to be found. The *Inferno* has penetrated the world. If images of horror are sought after, it is to his works that all subsequent ages have turned ; if those of love and divine felicity are desired, all turn to the *Paradiso* and the Spirit of Beatrice. Sir Joshua Reynolds has exerted his highest genius in depicting the frightful scene described by him, when Ugolino perished of hunger in the tower of Pisa. Alfieri, Metastasio, Corneille, Lope de Vega, and all the great masters of the tragic muse, have sought in his works the germs of their finest conceptions. The first of these tragedians marked two-thirds of the *Inferno* and *Paradiso* as worthy of being committed to memory. Modern novelists have found in his prolific mind the storehouse from which they have drawn their noblest imagery, the chord by which to strike the profoundest feelings of the human heart. Eighty editions of his poems have been published in Europe within the last half century ; and the public admiration, so far from being satiated, is augmenting. Every scholar knows how largely Milton was indebted to his poems for many of his most powerful images. Byron inherited, though often at second hand, his

* *Essay on Criticism.*

mantle, in many of his most moving conceptions. Schiller has embodied them in a noble historic mirror ; and the dreams of Goethe reveal the secret influence of the terrible imagination which portrayed the deep remorse and hopeless agonies of Malebolge.

MICHAEL ANGELO has exercised an influence on modern art little, if at all, inferior to that produced on the realms of thought by Homer and Dante. The father of Italian painting, the author of the frescoes on the Sistine Chapel, he was, at the same time, the restorer of ancient sculpture, and the intrepid architect who placed the Pantheon in the air. Raphael confessed that he owed to the contemplation of his works his most elevated conceptions of their divine art. Sculpture, under his original hand, started from the slumber of a thousand years, in all the freshness of youthful vigour ; architecture, in subsequent times, has sought in vain to equal, and can never hope to surpass, his immortal monument in the dome of St Peter's. He found painting in its infancy—he left it arrived at absolute perfection. He first demonstrated of what that noble art is capable. In the Last Judgment were revealed its wonderful powers, exhibiting, as it were, at one view, the whole circles of Dante's *Inferno*—portraying with terrible fidelity the agonies of the wicked, when the last trumpet shall tear the veil from their faces, and exhibit in undisguised truth that most fearful of spectacles—a *naked human heart*. Casting aside, perhaps with undue contempt, the adventitious aids derived from finishing, colouring, and execution, he threw the whole force of his genius into the design, the expression of the features, the drawing of the figures. There never was such a delineator of bone and muscle as Michael Angelo. His frescoes stand out in bold relief from the walls of the Vatican, like the sculptures of Phidias from the pediment of the Parthenon. He was the founder of the school of painting both at Rome and Florence—that great school which, disdaining the representation of still life, and all the subordinate appliances of the art, devoted itself to the representation of the grand and the beautiful ; to the expression of passion in all its vehemence—of emotion in all its intensity. His incomparable delineation of bones and muscles was but a means to an end ; it was the human heart, the throes of

human passion, that his master-hand laid bare. Raphael congratulated himself, and thanked God that he had given him life in the same age with such a painter ; and Sir Joshua Reynolds, in his last address to the Academy, “reflected, not without vanity, that his Discourses bore testimony to his admiration of that truly divine man, and desired that the last words he pronounced in that academy, and from that chair, might be the name of Michael Angelo.” *

The fame of these illustrious men has long been placed beyond the reach of cavil. Criticism cannot reach, envy cannot detract from, emulation cannot equal them. Great present celebrity, indeed, is no guarantee for future and enduring fame ; in many cases it is the reverse ; but there is a wide difference between the judgment of the present and that of future ages. The favour of the great, the passions of the multitude, the efforts of reviewers, the interest of booksellers, a clique of authors, a coterie of ladies, accidental events, degrading propensities, often enter largely into the composition of present reputation. But opinion is freed from all these disturbing influences by the lapse of time. The grave is the greatest of all purifiers. Literary jealousy, interested partiality, vulgar applause, exclusive favour, alike disappear before the hand of death. We never can be sufficiently distrustful of present opinion, so largely is it directed by passion or interest. But we may rely with confidence on the judgment of successive generations on departed eminence ; for it is detached from the chief cause of present aberration. So various are the prejudices, so contradictory the partialities and predilections of men, in different countries and ages of the world, that they never can concur through a course of centuries in one opinion, if it is not founded in truth and justice. The *vox populi* is often little more than the *vox diaboli* ; but the voice of ages is the voice of God.

It is of more moment to consider in what the greatness of these illustrious men really consists—to what it has probably been owing—and in what particulars they bear an analogy to each other.

They are all three distinguished by one peculiarity, which doubtless entered largely into their transcendent merit—

* REYNOLDS'S *Discourses*, No. 16, *ad finem*.

they wrote in the infancy of civilisation. Homer, as all the world knows, is nearly the oldest profane author in existence. Dante flourished about the year 1300 : he lived at a time when the English barons dwelt in rooms strewed with rushes, and few of them could sign their names. The long life of Michael Angelo, extending from 1474 to 1564, over ninety years, if not passed in the infancy of civilisation, was at least passed in the childhood of the arts : before his time, painting was in its cradle. Cimabue had merely unfolded the first dawn of beauty at Florence ; and the stiff figures of Pietro Perrugino, which may be traced in the first works of his pupil Raphael, still attest the backward state of the arts at Rome. This peculiarity, applicable alike to all these three great men, is very remarkable, and beyond all question had a powerful influence, both in forming their peculiar character, and in elevating them to the astonishing greatness which they speedily attained.

It gave them—what Johnson has justly termed the first requisite to human greatness—self-confidence. They were the first—at least the first known to themselves and their contemporaries—who had ventured on their several arts ; and thus they proceeded *fearlessly* in their great career. They had neither critics to dread, nor lords to flatter, nor former excellence to imitate. They portrayed with the pencil, or in verse, what they severally felt, undisturbed by fear, unswayed by example, unsolicitous about fame. Like Shakspeare, they were unconscious of excellence. Thence the freshness and originality, the vigour and truth, the simplicity and raciness by which they are distinguished. Shakspeare owed much of his greatness to the same cause ; and thence his similarity, in many respects, to these great masters of his own or the sister arts. When Pope asked Bentley what he thought of his translation of the *Iliad*, the scholar replied, “You have written a pretty book, Mr Pope ; but you must not call it Homer.” Bentley was right. With all its pomp of language and melody of versification, its richness of imagery and magnificence of diction, Pope’s Homer is widely different from the original. He could not avoid it. The “awful simplicity of the Grecian bard, his artless grandeur and unaffected majesty,” will be sought for in vain in the translation ; but if they had appeared there,

it would have been unreadable in that age. Michael Angelo, in his bold conceptions, energetic will, and rapid execution, bears a close resemblance to the father of poetry. In both, the same faults, as we esteem them, are conspicuous, arising from a too close imitation of nature, and a carelessness in rejecting images or objects which are of an ordinary or homely description. Dante was incomparably more learned than either. He followed Virgil in his descent to the infernal regions ; and exhibits an intimate acquaintance with ancient history, as well as that of the modern Italian states, in the account of the characters he meets in that scene of torment. But in his own line he was entirely original. Homer and Virgil had, in episodes of their poems, introduced a picture of the infernal regions ; but nothing on the plan of Dante's *Inferno* had before been thought of in the world. With much of the machinery of the ancients, it bears the stamp of the spiritual faith of modern times. It lays bare the heart in a way unknown even to Homer and Euripides. It reveals the inmost man in a way which bespeaks the centuries of self-reflection in the cloister which had preceded it. It is the basis of all the spiritual poetry of modern, as the *Iliad* is of all the external imagery of ancient, times.

In this respect there is a most grievous impediment to genius in later, or, as we term them, more civilised times, from which, in earlier ages, it is wholly exempt. Criticism, public opinion, the dread of ridicule, then too often crush the strongest minds. The weight of former examples, the influence of early habits, the halo of long-established reputation, force original genius from the untrodden path of invention into the beaten one of imitation. Early talent feels itself overawed by the colossus which all the world adores ; it falls down and worships, instead of conceiving. The dread of ridicule extinguishes originality in its birth. Immense is the incubus thus laid upon the efforts of genius. It is the chief cause of the degradation of taste, the artificial style, the want of original conception by which the literature of old nations is invariably distinguished. The early poet or painter who portrays what he feels or has seen, with no anxiety but to do so powerfully and truly, is relieved of a load which crushes his subsequent compeers to the earth.

Mediocrity is ever envious of genius—ordinary capacity of original thought. Such envy in early times is innocuous or does not exist, at least to the extent which is felt as so baneful in subsequent periods. But in a refined and enlightened age, its influence becomes incalculable. Whoever strikes out a new region of thought or composition, whoever opens a fresh vein of imagery or excellence, is persecuted by the critics. He disturbs settled ideas, endangers established reputations, brings forward rivals to dominant fame. That is sufficient to render him the enemy of all the existing rulers in the world of taste. Even Jeffrey seriously lamented, in one of his first reviews of Scott's poems, that he should have identified himself with the unpicturesque and expiring images of feudality, which no effort could render poetical. Racine's tragedies were received with such a storm of criticism as wellnigh cost the sensitive author his life ; and Rousseau was so rudely handled by contemporary writers on his first appearance, that it confirmed him in his morbid hatred of civilisation. The vigour of these great men, indeed, overcame the obstacles created by contemporary envy ; but how seldom, especially in a refined age, can genius effect such a prodigy ! How often is it crushed in the outset of its career, or turned aside into the humble and unobtrusive path of imitation, to shun the danger with which that of originality is beset !

Virgil's *Æneid* and Milton's *Paradise Lost* contain many more lines of poetic beauty than Homer's *Iliad* ; and there is nothing in the latter poem of equal length, which will bear any comparison with the exquisite picture of the primeval innocence of our First Parents in Milton's fourth book. Nevertheless, the *Iliad* is a more interesting poem than either the *Æneid* or the *Paradise Lost* ; and has produced, and will produce, a much more extensive impression on mankind. The reason is, that it is much fuller of event, is more varied, is more filled with images familiar to all mankind, and is less lost in metaphysical or philosophical abstractions than the English epic,—with puerile conceits or trifling events than the Roman. Homer, though the father of poets, was essentially dramatic ; he was an incomparable painter ; and it is his dramatic scenes, the moving panorama of his pictures, which fascinates the world. He often speaks

to the heart, and is admirable in the delineation of character; but he is so, not by conveying the inward feeling, but by painting with matchless fidelity its external symptoms, or putting into the mouths of his characters the precise words they would have used in similar circumstances in real life. Even his immortal parting of Hector and Andromache is no exception to this remark; he paints the scene at the Scaean gate exactly as it would have occurred in nature, and moves us as if we had seen the Trojan hero taking off his helmet to assuage the terrors of his infant son, and heard the lamentations of the mother at parting with her husband.

“ Ὡς εἰπὼν οὗ παιδὸς ὀρέξατο φαίδιμος Ἑκτωρ.
 Ἀψ δ' ὁ παῖς πρὸς κόλπον εὐζώνοιο τιθήνης
 Ἑκλίνθη ἰάχων πατρὸς φίλου ὄψιν ἀτυχθεῖς,
 Ταρβήσας χαλκὸν τε ἰδὲ λόφον ἵππιοχαίτην,
 Δεινὸν ἀπ' ἀκροτάτης κόρυθος νέοντα νοήσας.
 Ἑκ δ' ἐγέλασσε πατήρ τε φίλος καὶ πότνια μήτηρ.
 Αὐτίκ' ἀπὸ κρατὸς κόρυθ' εἴλετο φαίδιμος Ἑκτωρ,
 Καὶ τὴν μὲν κατέθηκεν ἐπὶ χθονὶ παμφανώσαν·
 Αὐτὰρ ὃ γ' ὃν φίλον υἱὸν ἐπεὶ κύσε πῆλὲ τε χερσὶν,
 Εἶπεν ἐπευξάμενος Διὶ τ' ἄλλοισιν τε θεοῖσιν·
 “ Ζεῦ ἄλλοι τε θεοὶ, δότε δὴ καὶ τόνδε γενέσθαι
 Παῖδ' ἐμὸν, ὥς καὶ ἐγὼ περ, ἀριπρεπέα Τρώεσσιν,
 Ὡδε βίην τ' ἀγαθὸν, καὶ Ἰλίου ἱφὶ ἀνάσσειν.
 Καὶ ποτέ τις εἴησι, Πατρός γ' ὅδε πολλὸν ἀμείνων,
 Ἑκ πολέμου ἀνιόντα· φέροι δ' ἔναρα βροτόεντα
 Κτείνας δῆϊον ἄνδρα, χαρεῖν δὲ φρένα μήτηρ.”
 Ὡς εἰπὼν ἀλόχοιο φίλης ἐν χερσὶν ἔθηκεν
 Παῖδ' ἐόν· ἢ δ' ἄρα μιν κηώδεϊ δέξατο κόλπῳ
 Δακρυόεν γελάσασα· Πόσις δ' ἐλέησε νοήσας,
 Χειρὶ τέ μιν κατέρεξε, ἔπος τ' ἔφατ', ἔκ τ' ὀνόμαζεν.”

“ Thus having spoke, the illustrious chief of Troy
 Stretched his fond arms to clasp the lovely boy.
 The babe clung crying to his nurse's breast,
 Scared at the dazzling helm and nodding crest.
 With secret pleasure each fond parent smiled,
 And Hector hasted to relieve his child :
 The glittering terrors from his brows unbound,
 And placed the beaming helmet on the ground :
 Then kissed the child, and lifting high in air,
 Thus to the Gods preferred a father's prayer :
 ‘ O Thou ! whose glory fills the ethereal throne,
 And all ye deathless Powers ! protect my son !
 Grant him, like me, to purchase just renown,
 To guard the Trojans, to defend the crown ;
 Against his country's foes the war to wage,
 And rise the Hector of the future age !
 So when triumphant from successful toils,
 Of heroes slain he bears the reeking spoils,
 Whole hosts may hail him with deserved acclaim,
 And say, this chief transcends his father's fame :
 While pleased amidst the general shouts of Troy,

His mother's conscious heart o'erflows with joy.
 He spoke, and fondly gazing on her charms,
 Restored the pleasing burden to her arms :
 Soft on her fragrant breast the babe she laid,
 Hushed to repose, and with a smile surveyed.
 The troubled pleasure soon chastised by fear,
 She mingled with the smile a tender tear ;
 The softened chief with kind compassion viewed,
 And dried the falling drops, and thus pursued."

—POPE'S *Homer*, vi. 594-624.

But with all these marvellous dramatic powers, Homer does not lay bare the heart with the terrible force of Dante, by a line or a word. There is nothing in the *Iliad* which conveys so piercing an idea of misery as the line in the *Inferno*, where the Florentine bard assigns the reason of the lamentations of the spirits in Malebolge—

"Questi non hanno speranza di morte."

"These have not the *hope of death*." There speaks the spiritual poet. He does not paint to the eye, he does not even convey character by the words he makes them utter ; he pierces, by a single expression, at once to the heart.

Milton strove to raise earth to heaven : Homer brought down heaven to earth. The latter attempt was a much easier one than the former ; it was more consonant to human frailty ; and, therefore, it has met with more success. The gods and goddesses in the *Iliad* are men and women, endowed with human passions, affections, and desires, and distinguished only from sublunary beings by superior power and the gift of immortality. We are more interested in them than we are in the genii or magicians of an Eastern romance ; for they are much liker ourselves, and are actuated by feelings much more analogous to those we feel in our own breasts. There is a sort of ærial epic poem going on between earth and heaven. They take sides in the terrestrial combat, and engage in the actual strife with the heroes engaged in it. Mars and Venus were wounded by Diomedes when combating in the Trojan ranks ; their blood, or rather the

"Ichor which blest immortals shed,"

flowed profusely ; they fled howling to the palaces of heaven. Enlightened by a spiritual faith, fraught with sublime ideas of the divine nature and government, Milton was incomparably more just in his descriptions of the Supreme Being, and more elevated in his picture of the angels and archangels who carried on the strife in heaven ; but he frequently falls

into metaphysical abstractions or theological controversies, which detract from the interest of his poem.

Despite Milton's own opinion, the concurring voice of all subsequent ages and countries has assigned to the *Paradise Regained* a much lower place than to the *Paradise Lost*. The reason is, that it is less dramatic—it has less incident and action. Great part of the poem is but an abstract theological debate between our Saviour and Satan. The speeches he makes them utter are admirable, the reasoning is close, the arguments cogent; but all is too dialectic. In many of the speeches of the angel Raphael, and in the council of heaven, in the *Paradise Lost*, there is too much of this species of discussion for a poem which is to interest the generality of men. Dryden says, that Satan is Milton's real hero; and every reader of the *Paradise Lost* must have felt, that in the Prince of Darkness, and Adam and Eve, the interest of the poem consists. The reason is, that the vices of the first, and the weakness of the two last, bring them nearer than any other characters in the poem to the standard of mortality; and we are so constituted, that we cannot take any great interest but in persons who share in our failings.

Perhaps the greatest cause of the sustained interest of the *Iliad* is the continued and vehement action which is maintained. The attention is seldom allowed to flag. Either in the council of the gods, the assembly of the Grecian or Trojan chiefs, or the contest of the leaders on the field of battle, an incessant interest is maintained. Great events are always on the wing: the issue of the contest is perpetually hanging, often almost even, in the balance. It is in the skill with which this is done, and a state of anxious suspense like the crisis of a great battle kept up, that the great art of the poet consists. It is done by making the whole dramatic—by bringing the characters forward constantly to speak for themselves, making the events succeed each other with almost breathless rapidity, and balancing success alternately from one side to the other, without letting it ever incline decisively to either. Tasso has adopted the same plan in his *Jerusalem Delivered*, and the contests of the Christian knights and Saracen leaders with the lance and the sword closely resemble those of the Grecian and

Trojan chiefs on the plain of Troy. Ariosto has carried it still further. The exploits of his Paladins—their adventures on earth, in air, and water; their loves, their sufferings, their victories, their dangers—keep the reader in a continual state of suspense. It is this sustained and varied interest which makes so many readers prefer the *Orlando Furioso* to the *Jerusalem Delivered*. But Ariosto has pushed it too far. In the search of variety, he has lost sight of unity. His heroes are not congregated round the banners of two rival potentates; there is no one object or interest in his poem. No narrow plain, like that watered by the Scamander, is the theatre of their exploits. Jupiter, from the summit of Gargarus, could not have beheld the contending armies. The most ardent imagination, indeed, is satiated with his adventures, but the closest attention can hardly follow their thread. Story after story is told, the exploits of knight after knight are recounted, till the mind is fatigued, the memory perplexed, and all general interest in the poem lost.

Milton has admirably preserved the unity of his poem; the grand and all-important object of the Fall of Man could hardly admit of subordinate or rival interests. But the great defect in the *Paradise Lost*, arising from that very unity, is want of variety. It is strung throughout on too lofty a key; it does not come down sufficiently to the wants and cravings of mortality. The mind is awe-struck by the description of Satan careering through the immensity of space, of the battle of the angels, of the fall of Lucifer, of the suffering, and yet unsubdued spirit of his fellow rebels, of the adamantine gates, and pitchy darkness, and burning lake of hell. But after the first feeling of surprise and admiration is over, it is felt by all, that these lofty contemplations are not interesting to mortals like ourselves. They are too much above real life—too much out of the sphere of ordinary event and interest. The fourth book is the real scene of interest in the *Paradise Lost*; it is its ravishing scenes of primeval innocence and bliss which have given it immortality. We are never tired of recurring to the bower of Eve, to her devotion to Adam, to the exquisite scenes of Paradise, its woods, its waters, its flowers, its enchantments. We are so, because we feel that it paints the Elysium to which all aspire, which all have for a brief

period felt, but which none in this world can durably enjoy.

No one can doubt that Homer was endowed with the true poetic spirit, and yet there is very little of what we now call poetry in his writings. There is neither sentiment nor declamation—painting nor reflection. He is neither descriptive nor didactic. With great powers for portraying nature, as the exquisite choice of his epithets, and the occasional force of his similes prove, he never makes any laboured attempt to delineate her features. He had the eye of a great painter ; but his pictorial talents are employed, almost unconsciously, in the fervour of narrating events, or the animation of giving utterance to thoughts. He painted by an epithet or a line. Even the celebrated description of the fires in the plain of Troy, likened to the moon in a serene night, is contained in seven lines.

“Ὡς δ’ ὅτ’ ἐν οὐρανῷ ἄστροι φαεινὴν ἀμφὶ σελήνην
 φαίνεται ἀριπρεπέα, ὅτε τ’ ἔπλετο ἡννεμος αἰθήρ,
 [Ἐκ τ’ ἔφανε πᾶσαι σκοπιαὶ καὶ πρόονες ἄκροι
 καὶ νάπαι, οὐρανόθεν δ’ ἄρ’ ὑπερράγη ἄσπετος αἰθήρ,]
 Πάντα δέ τ’ εἶδεται ἄστροι γέγηθε δέ τε φρένα ποιμήν.
 Τόσσα μεσηγὺν νεῶν ἡδὲ Ξάνθοιο ῥοάων
 Τρώων καϊόντων πυρὰ φαίνεται Ἰλιόθι πρό.
 Χίλι’ ἄρ’ ἐν πεδίῳ πυρὰ καίετο, πὰρ δὲ ἐκάστῳ
 Εἶατο πεντήκοντα σέλα πυρὸς αἰθομένοιο.”

—*Iliad*, viii. 551.

“As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night,
 O’er heaven’s clear azure spreads her sacred light ;
 When not a breath disturbs the deep serene,
 And not a cloud o’ercasts the solemn scene ;
 Around her throne the vivid planets roll,
 And stars unnumbered gild the glowing pole ;
 O’er the dark trees a yellower verdure shed,
 And tip with silver every mountain’s head :
 Then shine the vales, the rocks in prospect rise,
 A flood of glory bursts from all the skies ;
 The conscious swains, rejoicing in the sight,
 Eye the blue vault and bless the useful light.
 So many flames before proud Ilion blaze,
 And lighten glimmering Xanthus with their rays ;
 The long reflections of the distant fires
 Gleam on the walls, and tremble on the spires ;
 A thousand piles the dusky horrors gild,
 And shoot a shady lustre o’er the field ;
 Full fifty guards each flaming pile attend,
 Whose umbered arms by fits thick flashes lend.”

—POPE’S *Homer*.*

* This passage, and the exquisite translation, or rather amplification, by Pope, paint ancient and modern poetry to the life. Homer, like Job, sketches in a few lines the great features of the scene, evidently vividly painted in his mind’s eye. Pope fills up this outline with a variety of additional images, true to the original design, but original in the translator.

His rosy-fingered morn — cloud-compelling Jupiter — Neptune, stiller of the waves — Aurora rising from her crocus bed — Night drawing her veil over the heavens — the black keel careering through the lashing waves — the shout of the far-sounding sea — and the like, from which subsequent poets and dramatists have borrowed so largely, are all brief allusions, or epithets, which evidently did not form the main object of his strains. He was a close observer of nature — its lights, its shades, its storms and calms, its animals and birds, their migrations, their cries and habits ; but he never suspends his narrative to describe them. We shall look in vain in the *Iliad*, and even the *Odyssey*, for the lengthened pictures of scenery which are so frequent in Virgil and Tasso, and appear in such rich profusion in Milton. He describes storms only as objects of terror, not to paint them to the eye. Such things are to be found in the book of Job and in the Psalms, but with the same brevity and magical force of emphatic expression. There never was a greater painter of nature than Homer ; there never was a man who aimed less at being so.

The portraying of character and event was the great and evident object of the Grecian bard ; and there his powers may almost be pronounced unrivalled. He never tells you, unless it is sometimes to be inferred from an epithet, what the man's character that he introduces is. He trusts to the character to delineate itself. He lets us get acquainted with his heroes, as we do with persons around us, by hearing them speak, and seeing them act. In preserving character, in this dramatic way of representing it, he is unrivalled. He does not tell you that Nestor had the garrulity of age, and loved to recur to the events of his youth ; but he never makes him open his mouth without descanting on the adventures of his early years, and the degenerate race of mortals who have succeeded the paladins of former days. He does not tell us that Achilles was wrathful and impetuous ; but every time he speaks, the anger of the son of Peleus comes boiling over his lips. He does not describe Agamemnon as overbearing and haughty ; but the pride of the king of men is continually appearing in his words and actions, and it is the evident moral of the *Iliad* to represent its pernicious effects on the affairs of the

Hellenic confederacy. Ulysses never utters a word in which the cautious and prudent counsellor, sagacious in design but prompt in execution, wary in the council but decided in the field, far-seeing but yet persevering, is not apparent. Diomedes never falters; alike in the field and the council he is indomitable. When Hector was careering in his chariot round their fortifications, and the king of men counselled retreat, he declared he would remain, were it only with Sthenelus and his friends. So completely marked, so well defined are his characters, though they were all rapacious chiefs at first sight, little differing from each other, that it has been observed with truth, that one well acquainted with the *Iliad* could tell, upon hearing one of the speeches read out without a name, who was the chief who uttered it.

The two authors, since his time, who have most nearly approached him in this respect, are Shakspeare and Scott. Both seem to have received the pencil which paints the human heart from nature herself. Both had a keen and searching eye for character in all grades and walks of life; and what is a general accompaniment of such a disposition, a strong sense of the ridiculous. Both seized the salient points in mental disposition, and perceived at a glance, as it were, the ruling propensity. Both impressed this character so strongly on their minds, that they threw themselves, as it were, into the very souls of the persons whom they delineated, and made them speak and act like nature herself. It is this extraordinary faculty of identifying themselves with their characters, and bringing out of their mouth the very words which, in real life, would have come, which constitutes the chief and permanent attraction of these wonderful masters of the human heart. Cervantes had it in an equal degree; and thence it is that Homer, Shakspeare, Cervantes, and Scott, have made so great, and, to all appearance, durable an impression on mankind. The human heart is, at bottom, everywhere the same. There is infinite diversity in the dress he wears, but the naked human figure of one country scarcely differs from another. The writers who have succeeded in reaching this deep substratum, this far-hidden but common source of human action, are understood and admired over all the world. It

is the same on the banks of the Simoïs as on those of the Avon—on the Sierra Morena as on the Scottish hills. They are understood alike in Europe as in Asia—in ancient as in modern times; one unanimous burst of admiration salutes them from the North Cape to Cape Horn—from the age of Pisistratus to that of Napoleon.

Strange as it may appear to superficial observers, Cervantes bears a close analogy, in many particulars, to Homer. Circumstances, and an inherent turn for humour, made him throw his genius into an exquisite ridicule of the manners of chivalry; but the author of *Don Quixote* had in him the spirit of a great epic poet. His lesser pieces prove it; unequivocal traces of it are to be found in the adventures of the Knight of La Mancha himself. The elevation of mind which, amidst all his aberrations, appears in that erratic character; the incomparable traits of nature with which the work abounds; the faculty of describing events in the most striking way; of painting scenes in a few words; of delineating characters with graphic fidelity, and keeping them up with perfect consistency, which are so conspicuous in *Don Quixote*, are so many of the most essential qualities of an epic poet. Nor were the ardour of imagination, the romantic disposition, the brilliancy of fancy, the lofty aspirations, the tender heart, which form the more elevated and not less essential part of such a character, wanting in the Spanish novelist.

Sir Walter Scott more nearly resembles Homer than any poet who has sung since the siege of Troy. Not that he has produced any poem which will for a moment bear a comparison with the *Iliad*—fine as the *Lady of the Lake* and *Marmion* are, it would be the height of national partiality to make any such comparison. But, nevertheless, Sir Walter's mind was cast in the same mould, and was in some respects of the same dimensions, as that of Homer. We see in him the same combination of natural sagacity with acquired information; of pictorial eye with dramatic capability; of observation of character with reflection and feeling; of graphic power with poetic fervour; of ardour of imagination with rectitude of principle; of warlike enthusiasm with domestic tenderness, which have rendered the Grecian bard immortal. It is in his novels, however, more

than his poetry, that this resemblance appears; the author of *Waverley* more nearly approaches the blind bard than the author of the *Lay*. His romances in verse contain some passages which are sublime, many which are beautiful, some pathetic. They are all interesting, and written in the same easy, careless style, interspersed with the most homely and grotesque expressions, which is so well known to all the readers of the *Iliad*. The battle in *Marmion* is beyond all question, as Jeffrey long ago remarked, the most Homeric strife which has been sung since the days of Homer. But these passages are few and far between; his poems are filled with numerous and long interludes, written with little art, and apparently with no other object but to fill up the pages or eke out the story. It is in prose that the robust strength, the powerful arm, the profound knowledge of the heart, appear; and it is there, accordingly, that he approaches at times so closely to Homer. If we could conceive a poem, in which the storming of Front-de-Bœuf's castle in *Ivanhoe*, the execution of Fergus in *Waverley*, the storm on the coast, and death-scene in the fisher's hut, in the *Antiquary*, the devoted love in the *Bride of Lammermoor*, the fervour of the Covenanters in *Old Mortality*, and the combats of Richard and Saladin in the *Talisman*, were united together, and intermingled with the incomparable characters, descriptions, and incidents with which these novels abound, they would form an epic poem, perhaps, second to none which has appeared since the days of Homer.

Doubts have sometimes been expressed, as to whether the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are all the production of one man. Never, perhaps, was doubt not merely so ill founded, but so decisively disproved by internal evidence. If ever in human composition the traces of one mind are conspicuous, they are in the poems of Homer. His beauties equally with his defects, his variety and uniformity, attest this. Never was an author who had so fertile an imagination for varying of incidents; never was one who expressed them in language in which the same words so constantly recur. This is the invariable characteristic of a great and powerful, but at the same time self-confident and careless mind. It is to be seen in the most remarkable manner in Bacon and

Machiavel; and not a little of it may be traced both in the prose and poetical works of Scott. The reason is, that the strength of the mind is thrown into the thought as the main object; the language, as a subordinate matter, is little considered. Expressions capable of energetically conveying the prevailing ideas of the imagination are early formed; but, when this is done, the powerful, careless mind readily adopts them on all future occasions where they are at all applicable. There is scarcely a great and original thinker in whose writings the same expressions do not very frequently recur, often in exactly the same order. How much this is the case with Homer—with how much discrimination and genius his epithets and expressions were first chosen, and how frequently he repeats them, almost in every page, need be told to none who are acquainted with his writings. This is the most decisive mark at once of genius and identity. Original thinkers fall into verbal repetition, because they are always speaking from one model—their own thoughts. Subordinate writers avoid this fault, because they are speaking from the thoughts of others, and share their variety. It requires as great an effort for the first to introduce difference of expression, as for the last to reach diversity of thought.

The reader of Dante must not look for the heart-stirring and animated narrative—the constant interest—the breathless suspense, which hurries us along the rapid current of the *Iliad*. There are no councils of the gods; no messengers winging their way through the clouds; no combats of chiefs; no cities to storm; no fields to win. It is the infernal regions which the poet, under the guidance of his great leader, Virgil, visits; it is the scene of righteous retribution through which he is led; it is the final apportionment of punishment and reward to crime and virtue, that he is doomed to witness. We enter the city of lamentation—we look down the depths of the bottomless pit—we stand at the edge of the burning lake. His survey is not a mere transient visit like that of Ulysses in Homer, or of Æneas in Virgil. He is taken slowly and deliberately through every successive circle of Malebolge; descending down which, like the visitor of the tiers of vaults, one beneath another, in a feudal castle, he finds every species of

malefactors, from the chiefs and kings whose heroic lives were stained only by a few deeds of cruelty, to the depraved malefactors whose base course was unrelieved by one ray of virtue. In the very conception of such a poem, is to be found decisive evidence of the mighty change which the human mind had undergone since the expiring lays of poetry were last heard in the ancient world ; of the vast revolution of thought and inward conviction which, during a thousand years, in the solitude of the monastery, and under the sway of a spiritual faith, had taken place in the human heart. A gay and poetic mythology no longer amazed the world by its fictions, or charmed it by its imagery. Religion no longer basked in the sunshine of the imagination. The awful words of judgment to come had been spoken ; and, like Felix, mankind had trembled. Ridiculous legends had ceased to be associated with the shades below : their place had been taken by images of horror. Conscience had resumed its place in the direction of thought. Superstition had lent its awful power to the sanctions of religion. Terror of future punishment had subdued the fiercest passions—internal agony tamed the proudest spirits. It was the picture of a future world—of a world of retribution—conceived under such impressions, that Dante proposed to give ; it is that which he has given with such terrible fidelity.

Melancholy was the prevailing characteristic of the great Italian's mind. It was so profound that it penetrated all his thoughts ; so intense that it pervaded all his conceptions. Occasionally bright and beautiful ideas flitted across his imagination ; visions of bliss, experienced for a moment, and then lost for ever, as if to render more profound the darkness by which they are surrounded. They are given with exquisite beauty ; but they shine amidst the gloom like sunbeams struggling through the clouds. He inherited from the dark ages the austerity of the cloister ; but he inherited with it the deep feelings and sublime conceptions which its seclusion had generated. His mind was a world within itself. He drew all his conceptions from that inexhaustible source ; but he drew them forth so clear and lucid, that they emerged embodied, as it were, in living images. His characters are emblematic of the various passions and vices for which different degrees of punish-

ment were reserved in the world to come ; but his conception of them was so distinct, his description so vivid, that they stand forth to our gaze in all the agony of their sufferings, like real flesh and blood. We see them, we feel them—we hear their cries—our very flesh creeps at the perception of their sufferings. We stand on the edge of the lake of boiling pitch—we feel the weight of the leaden mantles—we see the snow-like flakes of burning sand—we hear the cries of those who had lost the last earthly consolation, the hope of death :—

“ Quivi sospiri, pianti ed alti guai
Risonavan per l' aer senza stelle,
Perch' io al cominciar ne lacrimai.
Diverse lingue, orribili favelle,
Parole di dolore, accenti d' ira,
Voci alte e fioche, e suon di man con elle,
Facevano un tumulto, il qual s' aggira
Sempre 'n quell' aria senza tempo tinta,
Come la rena quando 'l turbo spira.

Ed io : maestro, che è tanto greve
A lor che lamentar li fa sì forte ?
Rispose : dicerolti molto breve.
Questi non hanno speranza di morte.”

Inferno, c. iii.

“ Here sighs, with lamentations and loud moans,
Resounded through the air pierced by no star,
That e'en I wept at entering. Various tongues,
Horrible languages, outcries of woe,
Accents of anger, voices deep and hoarse,
With hands together smote that swell'd the sounds,
Made up a tumult, that for ever whirls
Round through that air with solid darkness stain'd,
Like to the sand that in the whirlwind flies.

I then : ‘ Master ! What doth aggrrieve them thus,
That they lament so loud ?’ He straight replied :
‘ That will I tell thee briefly. These of death
No hope may entertain.’ ”

CARY'S *Dante, Inferno, c. iii.*

Here is Dante portrayed to the life in the very outset. What a collection of awful images in a few lines ! Loud lamentations, hideous cries, mingled with the sound of clasped hands, beneath a starless sky ; and the terrible answer, as the cause of this suffering, “ These have not the hope of death.”

The very first lines of the *Inferno*, when the gates of Hell were approached, and the inscription over them appeared, paints the dismal character of the poem, and yet brings before us, too, the sense of divine love and justice with which the author was penetrated.

"Per me si va nella città dolente ;
 Per me si va nell' eterno dolore ;
 Per me si va tra la perduta gente :
 Giustizia mosse 'l mio alto Fattore ;
 Fecemi la divina Potestate,
 La somma Sapienza e 'l primo Amore.
 Dinanzi a me non fur cose create,
 Se non eterne ; ed io eterno duro :
 Lasciate ogni speranza voi che 'ntrate."

Inferno, c. iii.

"Through me you pass into the city of woe :
 Through me you pass into eternal pain :
 Through me among the people lost for aye.
 Justice the founder of my fabric moved :
 To rear me was the task of power divine,
 Supremest wisdom, and primeval love.
 Before me things create were none, save things
 Eternal, and eternal I endure.
 All hope abandon, ye who enter here."

CARY'S Dante, Inferno, c. iii.

Dante had much more profound feelings than Homer, and therefore he has painted deep mysteries of the human heart with greater force and fidelity. The more advanced age of the world, the influence of a spiritual faith, the awful anticipation of judgment to come, the inmost feelings which, during long centuries of seclusion, had been drawn forth in the cloister, the protracted sufferings of the dark ages, had laid bare the human heart. Its sufferings, its terrors, its hopes, its joys, had become as household words. The Italian poet shared, as all do, in the ideas and images of his age, and to these he added many which were entirely his own. He painted the inward man, and painted him from his own feelings, not the observation of others. This is the grand distinction between him and Homer ; and this it is which has given him, in the delineation of mind, his great superiority. The Grecian bard was an incomparable observer ; he had an inexhaustible imagination for fiction, as well as a graphic eye for the delineation of real life ; but he had not a deep or feeling heart. He did not know it, like Dante and Shakspeare, from his own suffering. He painted the external symptoms of passion and emotion with the hand of a master ; but he did not reach the inward spring of feeling. He lets us into the character of his heroes by their speeches, their gestures, their actions, and keeps up their consistency with admirable fidelity ; but he does not, by a word, an expression, or an epithet, admits us into the inmost folds of the heart. None can do so but such as themselves

feel warmly and profoundly, and paint passion, emotion, or suffering from their own experience, not the observation of others. Dante has acquired his colossal fame from the matchless force with which he has portrayed the wildest passions, the deepest feelings, the most intense sufferings of the heart. He is the refuge of all those who labour and are heavy laden—of all who feel profoundly or have suffered deeply. His verses are in the mouth of all who are torn by passion, gnawed by remorse, or tormented by apprehension ; and how many are they in this scene of woe !

A distinguished modern critic * has said, that he who would now become a great poet must first become a little child. There is no doubt he is right. The seen and unseen fetters of civilisation ; the multitude of old ideas afloat in the world ; the innumerable worn-out channels into which new ones are ever apt to flow ; the general clamour with which critics, nursed amidst such fetters, receive any attempts at breaking them ; the prevalence, in a wealthy and highly civilised age, of worldly or selfish ideas ; the common approximation of characters by perpetual intercourse, as of coins by continual rubbing in passing from man to man, have taken away all freshness and originality from ideas. The learned, the polished, the highly educated, can hardly escape the fetters which former greatness throws over the soul. Milton could not avoid them : half the images in his poems are taken from Homer, Virgil, and Dante ; and who dare hope for emancipation when Milton was enthralled ? The mechanical arts increase in perfection as society advances. Science ever takes its renewed flights from the platform which former efforts have erected. Industry, guided by experience, in successive ages, brings to the highest point all the contrivances and inventions which minister to the comfort or elegances of life. But it is otherwise with genius. It declines in the progress of society, as much as science and the arts rise. The country of Homer and Æschylus sank for a thousand years into the torpor of the Byzantine empire. Originality perishes amidst acquisition. Freshness of conception is its life : like the flame, it burns fierce and clear in the fresh gales of a pure atmosphere, but languishes and dies in that polluted by many breaths.

* Macaulay.

It was the resurrection of the human mind, after the seclusion and solitary reflection of the middle ages, which gave this vein of original ideas to Dante, as its first awakening had given to Homer. Thought was not extinct; the human mind was not dormant during the dark ages; far from it—it never, in some respects, was more active. It was the first collision of their deep and lonely meditations with the works of the great ancient poets, which occasioned the prodigy. Universally it will be found to be the same. After the first flights of genius have been taken, it is by the collision of subsequent thought with it that the divine spark is again elicited. The meeting of two great minds is necessary to beget fresh ideas, as that of two clouds is to bring forth lightning, or the collision of flint and steel to produce fire. Johnson said he could not get new ideas till he had read. He was right; though it is not one in a thousand who strikes out original thoughts from studying the works of others. The great sage did not read to imbibe the opinions of others, but to engender new ones for himself; he did not study to imitate, but to create. It was the collision of mind with mind that he sought. It was the same with Dante; it is the same with every really great man. His was the first powerful and original mind which, fraught with the profound and gloomy ideas nourished in seclusion during the middle ages, came into contact with the brilliant imagery, touching pathos, and harmonious language of the ancients. Hence his astonishing greatness. He almost worshipped Virgil, he speaks of him as a species of god; he mentions Homer,—whom he knew only by tradition, and his imitation in the *Æneid*,—as the first of poets. But he did not copy either the one or the other; he scarcely imitated them. He strove to rival their brevity and beauty of expression; but he did so in giving vent to new ideas, in painting new images, in awakening new emotions. The *Inferno* is as original as the *Iliad*; incomparably more so than the *Æneid*. The progeny of original genius springing from study of great original genius is a new and noble creation: that of mediocrity in similar circumstances is a spurious and degraded imitation.

Dante paints the spirits of all the generations of men, each in their circle undergoing their allotted punishment; expiating

by suffering the sins of an upper world. Virgil gave a glimpse, as it were, into that science of retribution ; Minos and Rhadamanthus passing judgment on the successive spirits brought before them ; the flames of Tartarus, the rock of Sisyphus, the wheel of Ixion, the vulture gnawing the entrails of Tityon. But with Homer and Virgil, the descent into the infernal regions was a brief episode ; with Dante it was a whole poem. This world to come was all in all to him. Homer makes one of his heroes in the shades below say that he would rather live a day in the light of the sun, than for aye in Tartarus. There is the difference of the two poets. Dante wrote after the awful idea of a certain world to come had made mankind tremble. Immense was the effort of imagination requisite to give variety to such a subject, to prevent the mind from experiencing weariness amidst the eternal recurrence of crime and punishment. But the genius of Dante was equal to the task. His fancy was prodigious ; his invention boundless ; his imagination inexhaustible. Fenced in, as he was, within narrow and gloomy limits by the nature of his subject, his creative spirit equals that of Homer himself. He has given birth to as many new ideas in the *Inferno* and the *Paradiso*, as the Grecian bard in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

Though he had reflected so much and so deeply on the human heart, and was so perfect a master of all the anatomy of mental suffering, Dante's mind was essentially descriptive. He was a great painter as well as a profound thinker ; he clothed deep feeling in the garb of the senses ; he conceived a vast brood of new ideas, he arrayed them in a surprising manner in flesh and blood. He is ever clear and definite, at least in the *Inferno*. He exhibits in every canto of that wonderful poem a fresh image, but it is a clear one, of horror or anguish, which leaves nothing to the imagination to add or conceive. His ideal characters are real persons ; they are present to our senses ; we feel their flesh, see the quivering of their limbs, hear their lamentations, and feel a thrill of joy at their felicity. In the *Paradiso* he is more vague and general, and thence its acknowledged inferiority to the *Inferno*. But the images of horror are much more powerful than those of happiness, and it is they which have entranced the world. "It is easier," says

Madame de Stael, "to convey ideas of suffering than those of happiness ; for the former are too well known to every heart, the latter only to a few."

The melancholy tone which pervades Dante's writings was doubtless, in a great measure, owing to the misfortunes of his life ; and to them we are also indebted for many of the most caustic and powerful of his verses—perhaps for the design of the *Inferno* itself. He took vengeance on the generation which had persecuted and exiled him, by exhibiting its leaders suffering in the torments of hell. In his long seclusion, chiefly in the monastery of Santa Croce di Fonte Avellana, a wild and solitary retreat in the territory of Gubbio, and in a tower belonging to the Conte Falcucci, in the same district, his immortal work was written. The mortifications he underwent during this long and dismal exile are thus described by himself:—"Wandering over almost every part in which our language extends, I have gone about like a mendicant ; showing against my will the wound with which fortune has smitten me, and which is often falsely imputed to the demerit of him by whom it is endured. I have been, indeed, a vessel without sail or steerage, carried about to divers ports, and roads, and shores, by the dry wind that springs out of sad poverty."

In the third circle of hell, Dante sees those who are punished by the plague of burning sand falling perpetually on them. Their torments are thus described :—

"Supin giaceva in terra alcuna gente ;
 Alcuna si sedea tutta raccolta ;
 Ed altra andava continuamente.
 Quella che giva intorno era più molta ;
 E quella men che giaceva al tormento
 Ma Più al duolo avea la lingua sciolta.
 Sovra tutto 'l sabbion d'un cader lento
 Piovean di fuoco dilatate falde,
 Come di neve in alpe senza vento.
 Quali Alessandro in quelle parti calde
 D' India vide sovra lo suo stuolo
 Fiamme cadere infino a terra salde."

Inferno, c. xiv.

"Of naked spirits many a flock I saw,
 All weeping piteously, to different laws
 Subjected : for on earth some lay supine,
 Some crouching close were seated, others paced
 Incessantly around ; the latter tribe
 More numerous, those fewer who beneath
 The torment lay, but louder in their grief."

O'er all the sand fell slowly wafting down
 Dilated flakes of fire, as flakes of snow
 On Alpine summit, when the wind is hush'd.
 As, in the torrid Indian clime, the son
 Of Ammon saw, upon his warrior band
 Descending, solid flames, that to the ground
 Came down."

CARY'S *Dante*, c. xiv.

The first appearance of Malebolge is painted in these striking lines—

"Luogo è in Inferno, detto Malebolge,
 Tutto di pietra e di color ferrigno,
 Come la cerchia che d' intorno il volge.

Nel dritto mezzo del campo maligno
 Vaneggia un pozzo assai largo e profondo,
 Di cui suo luogo conterà l' ordigno.

Quel cinghio che rimane adunque è tondo
 Tra 'l pozzo e 'l piè dell' alta ripa dura,
 E ha distinto in dieci valli al fondo."

Inferno, c. xviii.

"There is a place within the depths of hell
 Call'd Malebolge, all of rock dark-stain'd
 With hue ferruginous, e'en as the steep
 That round it circling winds. Right in the midst
 Of that abominable region yawns
 A spacious gulf profound, whereof the frame
 Due time shall tell. The circle, that remains,
 Throughout its round, between the gulf and base
 Of the high craggy banks, successive forms
 Ten bastions, in its hollow bottom raised."

CARY'S *Dante*, c. xviii.

This is the outward appearance of Malebolge, the worst place of punishment in hell. It had many frightful abysses ; what follows is the picture of the first :—

"Ristemmo per veder l'altra fessura
 Di Malebolge e gli altri pianti vani :
 E vidila mirabilmente oscura.

Quale nell' arzana de' Veneziani
 Bolle l' inverno la tenace pece,
 A rimpalmar li legni lor non sani—

Tal non per fuoco ma per divina arte,
 Bollia laggiuso una pegola spessa,
 Che 'nviscava la ripa d'ogni parte.
 I, vedea lei, ma non vedeva in essa
 Ma che le bolle che 'l bollor levava,
 E gonfiar tutta e riseder compressa.

E vidi dietro a noi un diavol nero
 Correndo su per lo scoglio venire.
 Ahi quant' egli era nell' aspetto fiero !
 E quanto mi pareva nell' atto acerbo,
 Con l' ali aperte e sovre i piè leggiero !
 L' omero suo ch' era acuto e superbo
 Carcava un peccator con ambo l'anche,
 Ed ei tenea de' piè ghermito il nerbo.

Laggiù il buttò e per lo scoglio duro
Si volse, e mai non fu mastino sciolto
Con tanta fretta a seguitar lo furo.

Quei s' attuffò e tornò su convolto ;
Ma i demon che del ponte avean coverchio
Gridar : qui non ha luogo il Santo Volto.

Qui si nuota altramenti che nel Serchio :
Però se tu non vuoi de' nostri graffi,
Non far sovra la pegola soverchio.

Poi l' addentar con più di cento raffi,
Disser : coverto convien che qui balli,
Si che se puoi nascosamente accaffi."

Inferno, c. xxi.

"———To the summit reaching, stood
To view another gap, within the round
Of Malebolge, other bootless pangs.
Marvellous darkness shadow'd o'er the place ;
In the Venetian's arsenal as boils
Through wintry months tenacious pitch, to smear
Their unsound vessels in the wintry clime.

So, not by force of fire but art divine,
Boil'd here a glutinous thick mass, that round
Limed all the shore beneath. I that beheld,
But therein not distinguish'd, save the bubbles
Raised by the boiling, and one mighty swell
Heave, and by turns subsiding fall.

Behind me I beheld a devil black,
That running up, advanced along the rock,
Ah ! what fierce cruelty his look bespake.
In act how bitter did he seem, with wings
Buoyant outstretch'd, and feet of nimblest tread.
His shoulder, proudly eminent and sharp,
Was with a sinner charged ; by either haunch
He held him, the foot's sinew griping fast.

Him dashing down, o'er the rough rock he turn'd :
Nor ever after thief a mastiff loosed
Sped with like eager haste. That other sank,
And forthwith writhing to the surface rose.
But those dark demons, shrouded by the bridge,
Cried—' Here the hallow'd visage saves not : here
Is other swimming than in Serchio's wave.
Wherefore, if thou desire we rend thee not,
Take heed thou mount not o'er the pitch.' This said,
They grappled him with more than hundred hooks,
And shouted—' Cover'd thou must sport thee here ;
So, if thou canst, in secret mayst thou filch.'"

CARY'S *Dante*, c. xxi.

Fraught as his imagination was with gloomy ideas, with images of horror, it is the fidelity of his descriptions, the minute reality of his pictures, which gives them their terrible power. He knew well what it is that penetrates the soul. His images of horror in the infernal regions were all founded on those familiar to every one in the upper world ; it was from the caldron of boiling pitch in

the arsenal of Venice that he took his idea of one of the pits of Malebolge. But what a picture does he there exhibit! The writhing sinner plunged headlong into the boiling waves, rising to the surface, and a hundred demons mocking his sufferings, and with outstretched hooks tearing his flesh till he dived again beneath the liquid fire! It is the reality of the scene, the images familiar yet magnified in horror, which constitutes its power. We stand by; our flesh creeps as it would at witnessing an *auto-da-fè* of Castile, or on beholding a victim perishing under the knout in Russia.

Michael Angelo was, in one sense, the painter of the Old Testament, as his bold and aspiring genius aimed rather at delineating the events of warfare, passion, or suffering, chronicled in the records of the Jews, than the scenes of love, affection, and benevolence, depicted in the gospels. But his mind was not formed merely on the events recorded in antiquity: it is no world doubtful of the immortality of the soul which he depicts. He is rather the personification in painting of the soul of Dante. His imagination was evidently fraught with the conceptions of the *Inferno*. The expression of mind beams forth in all his works. Vehement passion, stern resolve, undaunted valour, sainted devotion, infant innocence, alternately occupied his pencil. It is hard to say in which he was greatest. In all his works we discern marks of the genius of antiquity meeting the might of modern times: the imagery of mythology blended with the aspirations of Christianity. We see it in the dome of St Peter's, we see it in the statue of Moses. Grecian sculpture was the realisation in form of the conceptions of Homer; Italian painting the representation on canvass of the revelations of the Gospel, which Dante clothed in the garb of poetry. Future ages should ever strive to equal, but can never hope to excel them.

Never did artist work with more persevering vigour than Michael Angelo. He himself said that he laboured harder for fame than ever poor artist did for bread. Born of a noble family, the heir to considerable possessions, he took to the arts from his earliest years from enthusiastic passion and conscious power. During a long life of ninety years, he prosecuted them with the ardent zeal of youth. He

was consumed by the thirst for fame, the desire of great achievements, the invariable mark of heroic minds; and which, as it is altogether beyond the reach of the great bulk of mankind, so is the feeling of all others which to them is most incomprehensible. Nor was that noble enthusiasm without its reward. It was his extraordinary good fortune to be called to form, at the same time, the Last Judgment on the wall of the Sistine Chapel, the glorious dome of St Peter's, and the group of Notre Dame de Pitié, which now adorns the chapel of the Crucifix, under the roof of that august edifice. The "Holy Family" in the Palazzo Pitti at Florence, and the "Three Fates" in the same collection, give an idea of his powers in oil-painting. Thus he carried to the highest perfection, at the same time, the rival arts of architecture, sculpture, fresco and oil painting.* He may truly be called the founder of Italian painting, as Homer was of the ancient epic, and Dante of the great style in modern poetry. None but a colossal mind could have done such things. Raphael took lessons from him in painting, and professed through life the most unbounded respect for his great preceptor. None have attempted to approach him in architecture; the cupola of St Peter's stands alone in the world.

But notwithstanding all this, Michael Angelo had some defects. He created the great style in painting—a style which has made modern Italy as immortal as the arms of the Legions did the ancient. But the very grandeur of his conceptions, the vigour of his drawing, his incomparable command of bone and muscle, his lofty expression and impassioned mind, made him neglect, and perhaps despise, the lesser details of his art. Ardent in the pursuit of expression, he often overlooked execution. When he painted the Last Judgment or the Fall of the Titans in fresco, on the ceiling and walls of the Sistine Chapel, he was incomparable; but that gigantic style was unsuitable for lesser pictures or rooms of ordinary proportions. By the study of his masterpieces, subsequent painters have often

* The finest design ever conceived by Michael Angelo was a cartoon representing warriors bathing, and some buckling on their armour at the sound of the trumpet, which summoned them to their standards in the war between Pisa and Florence. It perished, however, in the troubles of the latter city; but an engraved copy remains of part, which justifies the eulogiums bestowed upon it.

been led astray; they have aimed at force of expression to the neglect of delicacy in execution. This defect is, in an especial manner, conspicuous in Sir Joshua Reynolds, who worshipped Michael Angelo with the most devoted fervour; and through him it has descended to Lawrence, and nearly the whole modern school of England. When we see Sir Joshua's noble glass window in Magdalen College, Oxford, we behold the work of a worthy pupil of Michael Angelo; we see the great style of painting in its proper place, and applied to its appropriate object. But when we compare his portraits, or imaginary pieces in oil, with those of Titian, Velasquez, or Vandyke, the inferiority is manifest. It is not in the design, but the finishing; not in the conception, but the execution. The colours are frequently raw and harsh; the details or distant parts of the piece ill-finished or neglected. The bold neglect of Michael Angelo is very apparent. Raphael, with less original genius than his immortal master, had more taste and much greater delicacy of pencil; his conceptions, less extensive and varied, are more perfect; his finishing is always exquisite. He is the Virgil of painting. Unity of emotion was his great object in design; equal delicacy of finishing in execution. Thence he has attained, by universal consent, the highest place in his noble art.

"Nothing," says Sir Joshua Reynolds, "is denied to well-directed labour; nothing is to be attained without it." "Excellence in any department," says Johnson, "can now be attained only by the labour of a lifetime; it is not to be purchased at a lesser price." These words should ever be present to the minds of all who aspire to rival the great of former days; who feel in their bosoms a spark of the spirit which led Homer, Dante, and Michael Angelo to immortality. In a luxurious age, comfort or station is deemed the chief good of life; in a commercial community, money becomes the universal object of ambition. Thence our acknowledged deficiency in the fine arts; thence our growing weakness in the higher branches of literature. Talent looks for its reward too soon. Genius seeks an immediate recompense; long-protracted exertions are never attempted; great things are not done, because great efforts are not made. None will work now without the prospect of an immediate

return. Very possibly it is so ; but then let us not hope or wish for immortality. "Present time and future," says Sir Joshua Reynolds, "are rivals ; he who solicits the one must expect to be discountenanced by the other." It is not that we want genius ; what we want is the great and heroic spirit which will devote itself, by strenuous efforts, to great things, without seeking any reward but their accomplishment.

Nor let it be said that great subjects for the painter's pencil, the poet's muse, are not to be found—that they are exhausted by former efforts, and nothing remains to us but imitation. Nature is inexhaustible ; the events of men are unceasing, their variety is endless. Philosophers were mourning the monotony of time, historians were deploring the sameness of events, in the years preceding the French Revolution—on the eve of the Reign of Terror, the flames of Moscow, the retreat from Russia. What was the strife around Troy to the battle of Leipsic ?—the contests of Florence and Pisa to the Revolutionary war ?—what ancient naval victory to that of Trafalgar ? Rely upon it, subjects for genius are not wanting ; genius itself, steadily and perseveringly directed, is the thing required. But genius and energy alone are not sufficient ; COURAGE and disinterestedness are needed more than all. Courage to withstand the assaults of envy, to despise the ridicule of mediocrity—disinterestedness to trample under foot the seductions of ease, and disregard the attractions of opulence. A heroic mind is more wanted in the library or the studio than in the field. It is wealth and cowardice which extinguish the light of genius, and dig the grave of literature as of nations.

T H E G R E E K D R A M A

[BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, MARCH 1846]

THE Drama, in its higher branches, is perhaps the greatest effort of human genius. It requires for its successful cultivation a combination of qualities beyond what is necessary in any other department of composition. A profound and practical acquaintance with human nature in all its phases, and the human heart in all its changes, is the first requisite of the dramatic poet. The power of condensed expression—the faculty of giving vent to “thoughts that breathe in words that burn”—the art of painting by a line, an epithet, an expression, the inmost and most intense feelings of the heart, are equally indispensable. The skill of the novelist in arranging the incidents of the piece, so as to keep the attention of the spectators erect, and their interest undiminished, is not less necessary. How requisite a knowledge of the peculiar art called “stage effect” is to the success of dramatic pieces on the theatre, may be judged of by the well-known failures in actual representation of many striking pieces by our greatest tragic writers, especially Joanna Baillie and Lord Byron. The eloquence of the orator, the power of swaying at will the emotions and passions of the heart, of rousing alternately the glow of the generous, and the warmth of the tender affections, are not less indispensable. The great dramatic poet must add to this rare assemblage of qualities a thorough acquaintance with the characters and ideas of former times: with the lore of the historian, he must embody in his imaginary characters the incidents of actual event; with the fervour of the poet, portray the transactions and thoughts of past times; with the eye of the painter, arrange his scenery, dresses, and localities, so as to produce the strongest

possible impression of reality on the mind of the spectator. Unite in imagination all the greatest and most varied efforts of the human mind—the fire of the poet and the learning of the historian, the conceptions of the painter and the persuasion of the orator, the skill of the novelist and the depth of the philosopher, and you will only form a great tragedian. Ordinary observers often express surprise that dramatic genius, especially in these times, is rare ; let the combination of qualities essential for its higher flights be considered, and perhaps the wonder will rather be, that it has been so frequent in the world.

It is a sense of this extraordinary combination of power, necessary to the formation of a great dramatic poet, which has rendered the masterpieces of this art so general an object of devout admiration, to men of the greatest genius who have ever appeared upon earth. Euripides wept when he heard a tragedy of Sophocles recited at the Isthmian games ; he mourned—but his own subsequent greatness proved without reason—the apparent impossibility of rivaling his predecessor. Milton, blind and poor, found a solace for all the crosses of life in listening, in old age, to the verses of Euripides. Napoleon, at St Helena, forgot the empire of the world on hearing, in the long evenings, the masterpieces of Corneille read aloud. Stratford-on-Avon does not contain the remains of mere English genius ; it is the place of pilgrimage to the entire human race. The names of persons of all nations are to be found, as on the summit of the Pyramids, inscribed on the walls of Shakspeare's house ; his grave is the common resort of the generous and enthusiastic of all ages, and countries, and times. All feel they can

“ Rival all but Shakspeare's name below.”

That an art so noble as that of dramatic poetry, ennobled by such genius, associated with such recollections, so lofty in its purpose, so irresistible in its effects, should have fallen into comparative decline in this country in the brightest era of its literary, philosophical, and political achievements, is one of those singular and melancholy circumstances of which it seems at first sight impossible to give any explanation. Since the deep foundations of the English mind were stirred by the Reformation, what an astonishing succession of great

men in every branch of human thought have adorned the annals of England ! The divine conceptions of Milton, the luxuriant fervour of Thomson, the vast discoveries of Newton, the deep wisdom of Bacon, the burning thoughts of Gray, the masculine intellect of Johnson, the exquisite polish of Pope, the lyric fire of Campbell, the graphic powers of Scott, the glowing eloquence of Burke, the admirable conceptions of Reynolds, the profound sagacity of Hume, the pictured page of Gibbon, demonstrate how mighty and varied have been the triumphs of the human mind in these islands, in every branch of poetry, literature, and philosophy. Yet, strange to say, during two centuries thus marvellously illustrated by genius, intellect, and capacity in other departments of human exertion, there has not been a single great dramatic poet. Shakspeare still stands alone in solitary and unapproachable grandeur, to sustain, by his single arm, the tragic reputation of his country. Authors of passing or local celebrity have arisen. Otway has put forth some fine conceptions, and produced one admirable tragedy ; Sheridan sketched some brilliant satires ; and genius of the highest order in our times, that of Byron, Baillie, and Bulwer, has endeavoured to revive the tragic muse in these islands. But the first declared that he wrote his dramatic pieces with no design whatever to their representation, but merely as a vehicle of nobler sentiments in dialogue of verse ; the pieces of the second, how admirable soever, have never succeeded on the stage ; and the third is too great as a novelist to put forth his strength in compositions for the stage, or train his mind in the school necessary for success in that most difficult art. The English drama, in the estimation of the world—and in its just estimation—still stands on Shakspeare, and he flourished nearly three hundred years ago.

It was not thus in other countries, or in former times. Homer was the first, and still is one of the greatest, of dramatic poets ; the *Iliad* is a tragedy arranged in the garb of an epic poem. Æschylus borrowed, like Prometheus, the divine fire, and embodied the energy of Dante and the soul of Milton in his sublime tragedies. Sophocles and Euripides were contemporary with Pericles and Phidias : the same age witnessed the *Clouds* of Aristophanes, the death of Socrates, and the history of Thucydides. The warlike and savage

genius of the Romans made them prefer the excitement of the amphitheatre to the entrancement of the stage ; but the comedies of Plautus and Terence remain durable monuments, that the genius of dramatic poetry among them advanced abreast of the epic or lyric muse. The names of Alfieri, Metastasio, and Goldoni demonstrate that modern Italy has successfully cultivated the dramatic as well as the epic muse ; the tragedies of the first are worthy the country of Tasso, the operas of the second rival the charms of Petrarch. In the Spanish peninsula, Lope de Vega and Calderon have astonished the world by the variety and prodigality of their conceptions ;* and fully vindicated the title of the Castilians to place their dramatic writers on a level with their great epic poets.

Need it be told that France stands pre-eminent in dramatic excellence ; that Corneille, Racine, and Molière, were contemporaries of Bossuet, Massillon, and Boileau ; that the tragedies of Voltaire were the highest effort of his vast and varied genius ? Germany, albeit the last-born in the literary family of Europe, has already vindicated its title to a distinguished place in this noble branch of composition ; for Lessing has few rivals in the perception of dramatic excellence, and Schiller none in the magnificent historic mirror which he has placed on the stage of the Fatherland. How, then, has it happened that when, in all other nations which have risen to greatness in the world, the genius of dramatic poetry has kept pace with its eminence in all other respects, in England alone the case is the reverse ; and the nation which has surpassed all others in the highest branches of poetry, eloquence, and history, is still obliged to recur to the patriarch of a comparatively barbarous age for a parallel to the great dramatic writers of other states ?

The worshippers of Shakspeare tell us, that this has been owing to his very greatness ; that he was so much above other men as to defy competition and extinguish rivalry ; and that genius, in despair of ever equalling his vast and varied conceptions, has turned aside into other channels, where the avenue to the highest distinction was not blocked

* The first wrote *eighteen hundred* plays, the variety in the plots of which is so prodigious, that they are the great quarry from which almost all subsequent dramatic writers have borrowed the elements of their theatrical pieces.

up by the giant of former days. But a little reflection must be sufficient to convince every candid inquirer that this consideration not only does not explain the difficulty, but augments it. Genius is never extinguished by genius ; on the contrary, it is created by it. The divine flame passes from one mind to another similarly constituted. Thence the clusters of great men who, at intervals, have appeared simultaneously and close to each other in the world, and the long intervening periods of mediocrity or imitation. Did the immortal genius of Dante destroy subsequent poetic excellence in Italy ? Let Tasso, Ariosto, Metastasio, and Alfieri answer. Homer did not extinguish *Æschylus*—he created him. The Greek tragedy is little more than the events following the siege of Troy dramatised. The greatness of *Sophocles* did not crush the rising genius of *Euripides*—on the contrary, it called it forth ; and these two great masters of the dramatic muse thrice contended with each other for the prize awarded by the Athenians to dramatic excellence.* The great *Corneille* did not annihilate rivalry in the dramatic genius of France—on the contrary, he produced it ; his immortal tragedies were immediately succeeded by the tenderness of *Racine*, the wit of *Molière*, the versatility of *Voltaire*. *Lessing* in Germany was soon outstripped by the gigantic strength of *Schiller*. *Michael Angelo*, vast as his genius was, did not distance all competitors in Italy ; he was speedily followed and excelled by *Raphael* ; and when the boy *Correggio* saw *Raphael's* pictures, he said—"I too am a painter." Did the transcendant greatness of *Burke* close in despair the eloquent lips of *Pitt* and *Fox* ; or the mighty genius of *Scott* quench the rising star of *Byron* ? We repeat it—genius is never extinguished by genius ; it is created by it.

But if the state of dramatic poetry in Great Britain since the time of *Shakspeare* affords matter of surprise, the late history and present state of the drama, as it appears on the stage, affords subject of wonder and regret. We are continually speaking of the lights of the age, of the vast spread of popular information, of the march of intellect, and the

* *Euripides* was fifteen years younger than *Sophocles*—the latter being born in the year 495 B. C., the former in 480 ; and they thrice contended for the prize at the public games of Greece.

superiority of this generation in intelligence and refinement over all that have gone before it. Go into any of the theatres of London at this moment, and consider what evidence they afford of this boasted advance and superiority. Time was when the versatile powers of Garrick enchanted the audience ; and exhibited alternately the perfection of the comic and the dignity of the tragic muse. Mrs Siddons, supreme in greatness, has trode those boards ; Kemble, the “ last of all the Romans,” has, in comparatively recent times, bade them farewell. Miss O’Neil, with inferior soul, but equal physical powers,—Kean, with the energy, but unhappily the weaknesses of genius,—kept up the elevation of the stage. Talent, and that too of the very highest class, genius of the most exalted kind, are not awanting to support the long line of British theatric greatness ; the names of Charles Kean, Fanny Kemble, and Helen Faucit, are sufficient to prove, that if the stage is in a state of decrepitude, the fault has lain with the authors or the public, not the performers. But all is unavailing. Despite the most persevering and laudable efforts to restore the dignity of the theatre, and revive the sway of the legitimate drama, in which Mr Macready has taken so meritorious a part, tragedy in the metropolis is almost banished from the stage. It has been supplanted by the melodrama, dancing, and singing. It has been driven off the field by *Timour the Tartar*. Drury-Lane, sanctified by so many noble recollections, has become an English opera-house. Covent-Garden is devoted to concerts, and hears the tragic muse no more. Even in the minor theatres, where tragedy is sometimes attempted, it can only be relied on for transient popularity, and from the attraction of some brilliant theatric star. Its restoration was attempted at the Princess’s Theatre in Oxford Street, but apparently with no remarkable success ; and the tragedies of *Othello* and *Hamlet*, supported by the talent of Macready, required to be eked out by Mrs Caudle’s *Curtain Lectures*. We are no strangers to the talent displayed at many of the minor theatres both by the authors and performers ; and we are well aware that the varied population of every great metropolis requires several such places of amusement. What we complain of is, that they engross everything ; that tragedy and the legitimate drama are banished from the

stage, in all but the provincial cities, where, of course, it never can rise to the highest eminence.

All the world are conscious of the reality of this change, and many different explanations have been attempted of it. It is said that modern manners are inconsistent with frequenting the theatre: that the late hours of dinners preclude the higher classes from going to it; that the ladies' dresses are soiled by the seats in the boxes, before going to balls. The austerity of principle, in the strictly religious portion of the community, is justly considered as a great bar to dramatic success; as it keeps from the theatre a large part of society which, from the integrity and purity of its principles, would, if it frequented such places of amusement, be more likely than any other to counteract the downward tendency. The hideous mass of profligacy which in London, in the absence of the better classes of society, has seized upon the principal theatres as its natural prey, is loudly and with justice complained of by the heads of families; and the audience has, in consequence, too often turned into little more than strangers, or young men and women in quest of dissipation and gain. The spread of reading, and vast addition to the amount of talent devoted to the composition of novels and romances, is another cause generally considered as mainly instrumental in producing the neglect of the theatre. Sir Walter Scott, Bulwer, and James, it is said, have brought the drama to our fireside: we draw in our easy-chairs, when the winds of winter are howling around us, and cease to long for *Hamlet*, in reading the *Bride of Lammermoor*, or yielding to the entrancement of *Rienzi*. There is some reality in all these causes assigned for the decline of the legitimate drama in this country; they are the truth, but they are not the whole truth. A very little consideration will at once show, that it is not to any or all of these causes, that the decline of the higher branches of this noble art in Great Britain is to be ascribed.

Modern manners, late dinners, ball-dresses, and the Houses of Parliament, are doubtless serious obstacles to the higher classes of the nobility and gentry frequently attending the theatre; but the example of the Opera-house, which is crowded night after night with the élite of that very class, is sufficient to demonstrate that all these difficulties can be

got over, when people of fashion make up their minds to go to a place of amusement, even where not one in ten understands the language in which the piece is composed. The strictness of principle—mistaken, as we deem it, and hurtful in its effects—which keeps away a large and important portion of the middle and most respectable portion of the community, at all times, and in all places, from the theatre, is without doubt a very serious impediment to dramatic success, and in nothing so much so, as in throwing the patronage and direction of its performance into the hands of a less scrupulous part of society. But these strict principles, ever since the great Rebellion, have pervaded a considerable portion of British society ; and yet how nobly was the stage supported during the eighteenth century and the commencement of the nineteenth, in the days of Garrick, Siddons, and Kemble ! The great number of theatres which are nightly open in the metropolis, and rapidly increasing in all the principal cities of the kingdom, demonstrates, that the play-going portion of the community is sufficiently numerous to support the stage, generally in respectability, at times in splendour. Without doubt, the licentiousness which formerly prevailed in the saloons of the great theatres in London is a most serious evil, and it well deserves the consideration of Government, whether some means should not be taken for its correction ; but is the Opera-house so very pure in its purlieus ? and are the habitual admirers of the ballet likely to be corrupted by occasionally seeing *Othello* and *Juliet* ? The prevailing, and in fact universal, passion for reading novels at home, unquestionably affords an inexhaustible fund of domestic amusement ; but does experience prove that the imagination once kindled, the heart once touched, are willing to stop short in the quest of excitement—to be satisfied with imperfect gratification ? Novel reading is as common on the Continent as in this country ; but still the legitimate drama exhibits no such appearances of decrepitude in its capitals. The master-pieces of *Corneille* and *Racine* are still constantly performed to crowded houses at Paris ; the theatres of Italy resound with the melody of *Metastasio*, the dignity of *Alfieri* ; and singing and the melodrama have nowhere banished *Schiller's* tragedies from the boards of Vienna and Berlin.

We have said, that while we appreciate the motives, and respect the principles, which prevent so large a portion of the middle class of society from frequenting the theatre, we lament their determination, and regard it as an evil even greater to the morality than it is to the genius of the nation. In truth, it is founded on a mistaken view of the principles which influence human nature; and it would be well if moralists, and the friends of mankind, would reconsider the subject, before, in this country at least, it is too late. The love of the drama is founded on the deepest, the most universal, the noblest principles of our nature, as well as those of a most licentious character. It exists, and ever will exist. For good or for evil, its influence is immovable. We cannot extirpate, or even tangibly abridge its sway; the art of *Æschylus* and *Shakspeare*, of *Sophocles* and *Racine*, of *Euripides* and *Schiller*, is not to be extinguished by the respectable but contracted ideas of a limited portion of society. God has not made it sweeter to weep with those who weep, than to rejoice with those who rejoice, for no purpose. Look at the Arabs, as they cluster round the story-teller who charms the groups of Yemen, or the knots of delighted faces which surround the *Polchinello* of Naples, and you will see how universal is the passion in mankind for dramatic representations. But though we cannot eradicate the desire for this gratification, we may degrade its tendency, and corrupt its effects. We may substitute stimulants to the senses for elevation to the principles, or softening of the heart. By abandoning its direction to the most volatile and licentious of the community, we may render it an instrument of evil instead of good, and pervert the powers of genius, the magic of art, the fascinations of beauty, to the destruction instead of the elevation of the human soul.

It is for this reason that we lament, as a serious social and national evil, the long interregnum in dramatic excellence in our writers, and the woeful degradation in the direction of dramatic representations at our theatres. Immense is the influence of lofty and ennobling dramatic pieces when supported by able and impassioned actors. As deleterious is the sway of questionable or immoral pieces when decked out in the meretricious garb of fancy, or aided by the transient attractions of beauty. Who can tell how much

the heart-stirring appeals of Shakspeare have done to string to lofty purposes the British heart ; how powerfully the dignified sentiments of Corneille have contributed to sustain the heroic portions of the French character ? “ C’est l’imagination,” said Napoleon, “ qui domine le monde.” The drama has one immense advantage over the pulpit or the professor’s chair : it fascinates while it instructs—it allures while it elevates. It thus extends its influence over a wide and important circle, upon whom didactic precepts will never have any influence. Without doubt, the strong and deep foundations of public morality must be laid in religious and moral instruction ; if they are wanting, the social edifice, how fair soever to appearance, is built on a bed of sand. But fully admitting this—devoutly looking to our national Establishment for the formation of public principle—to our schools and colleges for the training of the national intellect—the experienced observer, aware of the sway of active principles over the human soul, will not neglect the subordinate but still powerful aid to be derived, in the great work of elevating and ennobling society, from the emotions which may be awakened at the theatre—the enthusiasm so often excited by tragic excellence. The thing to be dreaded with the great bulk of the active part—that is, by far the largest portion of mankind—is not their avowed infidelity or their open wickedness ; it is the sway of the degrading or selfish passions which is chiefly dangerous. The thing to be feared is, not that they will say there is no God, but that they will live altogether without God in the world. How important, then, that genius should be called in here to the aid of virtue, and the fascinations of the highest species of excellence employed to elevate, where so many causes exist to degrade the soul !

“ Così all’ egro faneiu! porgiamo aspersi,
 Di soave licor gli orsi del Vaso ;
 Suechi amari, ingannato intanto ei beve,
 Et dall’ inganno sue vita riceve.”

The elevating influence of the noble sentiments with which the higher dramatic works abound, is more loudly called for in this than it has been in any former period of British history. We are no longer in the age of enthusiasm. The days of chivalry have gone by—and gone by, it is feared, never to return. We are in the age of commerce and the

mechanical arts. Material appliances, creature comforts,—stimulants to the senses—now form the great moving power of society. Gain is everywhere sought after with the utmost avidity ; but it is sought not for any lofty object, but on account of the substantial physical comforts with which the possession of riches is attended. Sensuality, disguised under the veil of elegance, refinement, and accomplishment, is making rapid strides amongst us. It does so in all old, wealthy, and long-established communities ; it is the well-known and oft-described premonitory symptom of national decline. We should look in vain, in the British empire at this period, for the enthusiasm which manned the ramparts of Saragossa, the patriotism which fired the palaces of Moscow. We should find united, too generally it is to be feared, the timidity and selfishness which signed the capitulation of Venice. How important, then, to gain possession of so mighty a lever as the enthusiasm of the theatre affords, for moving the general mind, and counter-acting the selfishness which is degrading society ; and instead of permitting it to fall into the hands of vice, and to become the handmaid of licentiousness, to turn its vast powers to the rousing of elevated sentiments, the strengthening of virtuous resolutions, the nourishing of generous emotions ! Whoever succeeds in this, whether author, actor, or actress, is a friend to the best interests of humanity, and is to be ranked with the benefactors of the human race.

Nor let it be said that the theatre has been now irrevocably turned, in this country, to frivolous or contemptible representations, or that dancing and singing have for ever banished the tragic muse from the stage. Facts—well known and universally acknowledged facts, prove the reverse. How strong soever the desire for excitement or physical enjoyment may be, the passion for heart-stirring incident, the *besoin* of strong emotions, the thirst for tragic event, is still stronger. Look at the Parisian stage. What a concatenation of murders, suicides, conflagrations, massacres, and horrors of every description, have there grown up with the spread of the romantic drama in the lesser theatres ! That shows how strong is the passion for tragic excitement in highly civilised and long corrupt society. Where does the applause at any lofty or generous sentiment

begin in our theatres? In the galleries. That shows how widespread is the foundation of sympathy with virtue in mankind, when it is not obliterated, as it is so often in real life, by the selfish passions. Enter any of our courts of law, when any trial for murder or any other serious crime is going forward—observe how unwearied is the attention of all classes, and *especially the lowest*; with what patience they will sit for days and nights together, to watch the proceedings; mark the deathlike silence which pervades the hall, when any important part of the evidence is delivered, or the verdict of the jury is returned. Attend to the mighty throng which gazes at a public execution. The author once was present, when a hundred and fifty thousand persons assembled in one spot to witness the expiation of their guilt by two murderers on the scaffold.* When the mournful procession set out for the place of punishment, four miles distant, not a sound was to be heard from the innumerable spectators who lined the streets; the clang of the horses' hoofs on the pavement was audible among that vast multitude. When it returned with the dead bodies, the clang of voices, the pent-up emotion, burst forth in so mighty a shout, that the discharge of artillery would hardly have been heard in the throng. The anxiety, sometimes amounting almost to frenzy, to get a sight of the convicted murderer, to be present at the condemned sermon, to see his last agonies on the scaffold, to examine the scenes of his crime, even to obtain a lock of his hair, or a piece of his garments, is another proof of the disordered and often extravagant desires which the longing for strong and tragic excitement will produce in a large portion of society. Rely upon it, deep emotion, if rightly managed and properly directed, is more attractive than either amusement or licentiousness. Suffering exacts a far deeper sympathy than joy; the generous, for the time at least, overpower the selfish feelings. Let but the tragic muse be restored to her appropriate position on the stage, and supported by the requisite ability in the author and performers, and she will extinguish rivalry, and bear down opposition.

We have said that the tragic muse will do this, "if sup-

* At the execution of Doolan and Redding, for a combination murder near Glasgow, on 13th May 1842.

ported by the requisite ability in the *authors* and performers." We have said this advisedly ; for we belong to the former class, and we have no complaint to make of want of ability on the stage. On the contrary ; talent of the most powerful, genius of the most elevated kind, issue upon it. The fault lies with our own profession, or rather with that portion of it who cultivate dramatic composition. The origin of the evil is to be found, the remote cause of the present degraded condition of the stage, is to be found in—strike, but hear—IN SHAKSPEARE.

The most devoted worshipper of the genius of the bard of Avon, the most enthusiastic admirer of the profound knowledge of the human heart, and unequalled force of expression which he possessed, cannot exceed ourselves in the deep admiration which we entertain of his transcendent excellences. On the contrary, it is those very excellences which have done the mischief ; it is they which have misled subsequent dramatic writers in this country, and occasioned the constant failures by which his imitators have been distinguished. It is not surprising that it is so. Shakspeare was supremely great ; but he was so, not in consequence of his dramatic principles, but in spite of them. He shot his arrow further than mortal man has yet done ; but he shot it in some degree in a wrong direction, and no one since has been able to draw the bow of Ulysses.

There is no one who has not heard of the famous Dramatic Unities, and the long-continued controversy which has been maintained between the admirers of the Greek drama, founded on their strict observance, and the followers of Shakspeare, who set them at defiance. In this, as in other disputes, probably neither party will ever convince the other ; and the only effect of the contention is to fix each more immovably in his own opinion. But, waiving at present the abstract question, which of the two systems is, in itself, preferable, or essential to dramatic success, there is a practical consideration of deep interest to society, with which we are all concerned, and the result of which throws no small light on the theoretical principle. It is this : placing the creators of the two systems—Æschylus and Shakspeare—on a par ; conceding to the author of *Hamlet* an equal place with that of the composer of the *Prometheus Vincetus* ; which of the two

systems has had most success in the world ; has longest preserved its sway over the human mind ; has best withstood the causes of corruption inherent in all earthly change ?

What a noble set of followers have, in all ages, graced the banners of the Athenian bard ! Sophocles, Aristophanes, Menander, and Euripides, in Greece ; Terence and Plautus in Rome ; Metastasio, Goldoni, and Alfieri in Italy ; Corneille, Racine, Molière, and Voltaire in France ; Schiller,* in himself a host, in Germany—shine the brightest stars in the immortal band. Their merits may be unequal, their talent various, their pieces sometimes uninteresting ; but, taken as a whole, their works exhibit the greatest efforts of human genius. What has the Romantic school to exhibit after its inimitable founder, as a set-off to this long line of greatness ? The ephemeral and now forgotten lights of the British stage—the blasting indecencies of Beaumont and Fletcher ; the vigorous ribaldry of Dryden ; the shocking extravagances of the recent French and Spanish stage ; the *Tour de Nesle*, and other elevating pieces, which adorn the modern Parisian theatre, and train to virtuous and generous feeling the present youth of France. Shakspeare himself, with all his transcendent excellences, is unable to keep his ground on the British stage. Like all great men, whom accident or error has embarked in a wrong course, he has been passed in it by a host of followers, who, unable to imitate his beauties, have copied only his defects, till they have fairly banished the legitimate tragic drama from the London stage. If the precept of Scripture be true—“By their fruits shall ye know them”—the palm must be unquestionably awarded to the old Grecian school.

If the different principles on which the two great schools of the drama proceed are considered, it will not appear surprising that this result has taken place.

The Greek drama embraced a very limited number of stories and events, and they were all thoroughly known to every audience in the country. The incidents and tragic occurrences so wonderfully illustrated by the genius of their tragic poets, are almost to be found sketched out in the *Odyssey* of Homer, or in the successive disasters of the fated

* Schiller's dramas are of the modern kind, and the unities are not strictly observed ; but his finer pieces belong more nearly to the Grecian than the Romantic school.

race of *Œdipus*. The sacrifice of Iphigenia to procure fair gales when setting out for Troy, the foundation of the exquisite tragedy by Euripides of *Iphigenia in Aulis*; the subsequent meeting of her with her brothers, the basis of *Iphigenia in Tauris*, by the same poet; the murder of Agamemnon by Clytemnestra and her adulterous lover, the revenge of Electra and Orestes, who put their mother and her lover to death; the subsequent remorse and woeful fate of the avenging brother and sister, form so many tragedies, which for centuries entranced the Athenian audience. The sorrows of Andromache, when torn from her home after the death of Hector and sack of Troy, and subjected to the jealousy of the daughter of Menelaus; the deep woes of Hecuba, who saw in one day her daughter sacrificed on the tomb of Achilles, and the corpse of her son washed ashore, after having been perfidiously murdered by his Thracian host, as they appeared in the thrilling verses of Euripides, were all previously well known to the Grecian audience. If to these we add the multiplied disasters of the line of *Œdipus*; the despair of that unhappy man at his incestuous marriage with Jocasta; his subsequent sorrow when an exile, poor and bowed down by misfortune; the dreadful fate which befell his sons when they fell by each others' hands before the walls of Thebes; and the heroic self-sacrifice of Antigone to procure the rites of sepulture for her beloved and innocent brother, we shall find we have embraced nearly the whole dramas which exercised the genius of *Æschylus*, *Sophocles*, and *Euripides*.

It ensued from this limited number of incidents in the Greek drama, and the thorough acquaintance of the audience, in every instance, with the characters, the incidents, and the *denouement* of the piece, that the grand object of the poet was to work up *a particular part of the story to the highest perfection*, rather than to unfold the whole to an audience unacquainted with any part of it. It was that which created the difference between it and the Romantic drama of modern times. There was no use in attempting to create a new plot, or unfolding a fresh story; for it was an old one, already known to all the audience. It would have been like telling the story of Wallace, or Queen Mary, or Robert Bruce, to a Scottish assembly. Genius was to be displayed, effect

was to be produced, not by unfolding new and unknown incidents, but by working up to the highest degree those already known. Hence the peculiar character of the Greek drama ; hence the astonishing and unequalled perfection to which it was brought. The world has never seen, perhaps it will never again see, anything so exquisite as the masterpieces of Sophocles and Euripides—anything so sublime as some of *Æschylus*. All subsequent ages have concurred in this opinion. All nations have united in it. The moderns and the ancients, differing in so many other points, are at one on this. There is as little diversity of opinion on the subject, as in the admiration of the sculpture of *Phidias*, the verses of *Virgil*, or the paintings of *Raphael*.

It was by the strict observance of the unities, and the necessity to which it subjected the poet of supplying, by his own genius and taste, all adventitious aids derived from change of scene, splendour of decoration, and novelty of story, that this astonishing perfection was attained. Force of language, grandeur of thought, pathos of feeling, were all in all. The dramatist was compelled to rest on these, and these alone. If he did not succeed in them, he was lost. The audience, composed of the most refined and enlightened citizens that then existed in the world, went to the theatre, expecting not to be interested or surprised by the unravelling of a new and intricate story, but to be fascinated by the force of expression and pathos of feeling with which a mournful catastrophe already known was told. To attain this object, the dramatic writers of antiquity selected that period in an interesting and tragic story, when its incidents were approaching their crisis, when the denouement for good or for evil took place ; and they represented that at full length, and in all its detail, to the spectators. The previous incidents which had brought matters up to this point, were narrated in the course of the dialogue in the earlier scenes ; the closing catastrophe, often too terrible to be represented on the stage, was described by some of the characters who had witnessed it. But the intervening period, the events and thoughts which succeeded the past, and preceded the future, were painted in their fullest details, and with all the force and finishing of which the artist was capable. Nothing resembles the structure of a tragedy of

antiquity so much as a modern trial for murder ; and in the undying interest which such a proceeding invariably excites in all countries and all ages, we may see the deep foundation laid in human nature for the influence of that species of dramatic composition. As in the Greek drama, the witnesses tell the preceding story, and explain the previous crimes or events by which matters have been brought to the present stage, when life or death depend upon the issue of the proceedings. The trial itself takes up these proceedings at the decisive point, and, with strict regard to unity of time and place, exhibits their aims and issue to the mind of the spectators. If the execution of the criminal were immediately to follow the verdict of the jury, and some persons were, when the spectators were still sitting in the hall thrilling with the interest they had felt, to come in, and relate the demeanour and last words of the unhappy being on the scaffold, that would be a Greek drama complete.

As the field of dramatic representation was thus limited on the stage of antiquity, the whole genius and powers of the poet were bent to concentrating on that narrow space all the powers and beauties of which his art was susceptible. Nothing was omitted which could either elevate, interest, entrance, or melt the heart of the audience. It is a common opinion in modern times with persons not acquainted in the originals with the Greek tragedy, that it was couched in a stately measured tone, wholly different from nature, and more akin to the pompous and sonorous verses of the French theatre. There never was a greater mistake. If it is characterised by any peculiarity more than another, it is by the brevity and condensation of the language, the energy of the expressions, and the force with which the most vehement passions and strongest emotions of the heart are conveyed in the simplest words. So brief is the expression, so frequent the breaks and interjections, that the rhythm and verse are frequently, and for a long period, forgotten. Euripides alone, who had great oratorical powers, sometimes indulges in the lengthened disquisitions, the *arguments in verse*, which exhibit so admirable a view of all that can be urged on a particular subject, and which have been so frequently imitated by Corneille and Racine. But even he, when he comes to the impassioned or pathetic scenes, as in

the *Medea*, the *Iphigenia in Aulis*, and *Hecuba*, is as brief and energetic in his expression as Shakspeare himself. Simplicity of language, energy of thought, and force of passion, are the grand characteristics of the Greek drama, as they were of the Greek oratory, and their combination constituted the excellence of both. The fire of the poet, the reach of imagination, was reserved for the chorus, which frequently exhibited the most sublime specimens of lyric poetry, rivalling the loftiest strains of the Pindaric muse. Thus the audience, in a short piece, in which the plot was rapidly urged forward, and the interest was never allowed for a moment to flag, were presented alternately with the force of Demosthenes' declamation, the pathos of Sophocles' expressions, and the fire of Pindar's poetry. It was as if the finest scenes of Shakspeare's tragedies were thrown together with no other interjections but the eloquence of Burke in the dialogue, and lyric poetry on a level with Dryden's "Alexander's Feast," Gray's "Bard," or Campbell's "Last Man," in the chorus. Is it surprising that tragedies, exhibiting such a combination, worked out by the most perfect masters of the human heart, should have entranced every subsequent age?

Though one scene only was presented in each tragedy on the Greek stage, so that unity of place was effectually observed, yet unity of *time* was by no means so strictly attended to; so that the poet was far from being so fettered in this respect as is commonly imagined. Every scholar knows that a very considerable time, sometimes some hours, or half a day, were supposed to be consumed in the few minutes that the strophe and antistrophe of the chorus were in course of being chanted. For instance, in the *Antigone* of Sophocles, during the time that one of the chorus is reciting a few verses, the heroic sister has found out the body of her beloved brother, and, in violation of the command of Creon, bestowed on it the rights of sepulture. In the *Hecuba* of Euripides, in the brief space occupied by a chorus, her daughter Polyxene is led to the tomb of Achilles by Ulysses, and sacrificed there, in presence of the whole Greek army, to procure favourable gales for the return of the troops from Troy. In the *Electra* of the same author, during the strophes of one

chorus, Orestes and Electra effect the death of the husband of Clytemnestra; during another, murder their unhappy mother herself. In the *Phœnissæ* of Euripides, the duel between the two sons of Jocasta, their mutual slaughter, and the self-immolation of that fated mother on the body of her beloved son Polynices, take place while the chorus were reciting a few verses, and are described when the actors return on the stage. In truth, it is often in the tragic events which thus take place behind the scenes during the chorus, but in close connexion with what had just before been exhibited on the boards, that a material part of the interest of the piece consists, and the art of the poet is shown. The interest is never allowed for a moment to flag; it is wrought up first by the anticipation of the catastrophe, then by its description; and the intervening period, when it was actually going forward, is filled up by the recital of sublime lyric poetry, at once causing the stop of time to be forgotten, affording a brief respite to the over-wrought feelings, and yet keeping up the enthusiastic and elevated state of mind in the audience.

It is impossible to conceive a more perfect drama than the *Antigone* of Sophocles. The subject, the characters, the moral tone of the piece, are as perfect as its execution is masterly and felicitous. It possesses, what is not frequent in Greek tragedy, the interest arising from elevated moral feeling and heroic courage devoted to noble purposes. The steady perseverance of Antigone in her heroic resolution to perform the last rites to her dead brother, in defiance of the cruel threats of Creon; the courage with which she does discharge those mournful duties; the rage of the tyrant at the violation of his commands; the momentary reappearance of the woman in Antigone, when she thinks of her betrothed, and contemplates her dreadful fate, to be shut up in a living tomb in the rock; the despair of Hæmon, who kills himself on the body of his beloved; the silent despair of his mother, which, unable to find words for its expression, leads to her self-immolation—the last victim of the curses bestowed on the race of Œdipus,—are all portrayed with inimitable force and pathos. Simplicity of expression, depth of feeling, resolution of mind, are its great characteristics, as they are of all the works of

Sophocles. It has been revived with signal success in recent times. If a translation could be made, which should render into English the force and beauty of the original language, with the same felicity which Miss Helen Faucit threw the mingled energy and delicacy of Sophocles's conception into her representation of the character of Antigone, at the Theatres Royal, Dublin and Edinburgh, we should, indeed, have a perfect idea of the magic of the Greek drama. Such a translation is not beyond the bounds of possibility. The English language is capable of it, and could, in the hands of a master, render back a faithful image of the brevity and power of the Greek. But that master must be a Sophocles, or a Shakspeare; and ages will probably elapse, before the world produces either the one or the other.

The *Prometheus Vincetus* of Æschylus is not properly a drama; at least, it has so little of the peculiar interest belonging to that species of poetry, that it can hardly be called such. Nevertheless, it is perhaps the most sublime composition that ever came from the thoughts of uninspired man. It is meant to portray the heroic devotion, the undaunted courage of Prometheus—the friend of man, the assuager of his sufferings, the aider of his enterprises—who was chained to a rock, exposed to the burning heats of summer and the shivering frosts of winter, by Jupiter, for having stolen fire—the parent of art, the spring of enterprise, the source of improvement—from heaven, to give it to the human race. The opening scene, where Prometheus is chained to a rock in Scythia, by Vulcan, in presence of “Force and Strength,” the agents of Jupiter's commands; and the closing one, where he remains firm and unshaken amidst the wrath of the elements, the upheaving of the ocean, and the lightnings of heaven hurled at his devoted head, are of unrivalled sublimity. They literally realise the idea of the poet—

“Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Impavidum ferient ruinae.”

The *Prometheus Vincetus* is the *Inferno* of Dante dramatised; but it is fraught with a nobler moral. It does not portray the sufferings of sin for past guilt; it exhibits the heroism of virtue under present injustice. It paints

the triumph of devoted benevolence, sustained by unconquerable will, over the oppression of physical force, the tyranny of resistless power. It exhibits the charity of the Saviour in the *Paradise Regained*, united to the indomitable spirit of Satan, who is chained on the burning lake, in *Paradise Lost*. It is the prophetic wail of humanity, so often doomed to suffer in the best of causes from external injustice.

The *Iphigenia in Aulis* is the most perfect of all the tragedies of Euripides, and the best adapted for modern representation. The well-known story of the daughter of the King of Men being devoted to sacrifice, to appease the angry deities, and procure favourable gales for the fleet on the way to Troy, and of the agony of her parents under the infliction, is developed with all the pathos and eloquence of which that great master of the tragic art was capable. Nothing can exceed the progressive interest which the character of Iphigenia excites. At first, horror-struck, and shrinking with the timidity of her sex from the axe of the priest, she gradually rises when her fate appears inevitable, and at length devotes herself for her country with a woman's devotion, and more than a man's fortitude. In the French plays on the same subject, a love episode is introduced between her and Achilles; but the simplicity of the Greek original appears preferable, in which she had no previous acquaintance with the son of Peleus, and he is interested in her fate, and strives to avert it, only from finding that his name, as her betrothed, had, without his knowledge, been used by Agamemnon to induce Clytemnestra to bring her to the Grecian camp. Doubtless, the tenderness of Racine, in the love-scenes between her and Achilles, is inimitable; but the simplicity of the Greek original, where grief on her parents' part for her loss, and her own heroic self-sacrifice on the altar of patriotic duty, are undisturbed by any other emotion, is yet more touching, and far more agreeable to ancient manners, where love on the woman's part, previous to marriage, was, as now in the East, almost unknown.

In these great masterpieces of ancient art, the unity of emotions is strictly preserved; and it is that, joined to the lofty moral tone preserved through the drama, which con-

stitutes their unequalled charm. This, however, is not always the case in the Greek tragedies. They were not insensible to the effect of a high moral tone, or the development of poetical justice, but they did not regard either as the principal object, or even a material part, of dramatic composition. To delineate the play of the passions was their great object: Aristotle says expressly this was the end of tragedy. To this object they devoted all their powers; they succeeded in laying bare the human heart in its most agonised moments, and in most recesses, with terrible fidelity. In this way, they frequently represented it as torn by a double distress, each prompting to atrocious actions; as in the *Medea* of Euripides, where the unhappy wife of Jason, distracted by jealousy at the desertion and second marriage of her husband, destroys her own children in the fury of her vengeance against him; or the *Hecuba* of the same author, where the discrowned and captive widow of Priam, doomed in one day to see her daughter sacrificed on the tomb of Achilles, and the dead body of her son washed ashore by the waves, takes a terrible vengeance on his murderer, by putting his children to death, and turning himself abroad, after his eyes have been put out, to beg his way through the world. The Greeks seem to have been deeply impressed with the evils, vicissitudes, and sufferings of life. No word occurs so frequently in their dramas as *evils*, (*κακὰ*.) In witnessing the delineation of its miseries on the stage, they seem to have had somewhat of the same stern pleasure which the North American Indians have in beholding the prolonged torture inflicted on a condemned captive at the stake. Every one felt a thrill of interest, at beholding how another could bear a series of reverses and sufferings, which might any day be his own.

Notwithstanding all our admiration for the Greek tragedies, and firmly believing that they are framed on the true dramatic composition—the neglect of which has occasioned its long-continued decline in this country—we are yet far from thinking them perfect. The age of the world, the peculiarities of ancient manners, rendered it impossible they should be so. We could conceive dramas more unexceptionable and varied than any even of the masterpieces of Sophocles or Euripides to be possible. We are persuaded

the world will yet see them outdone ; though they will be outdone only by those who follow out their principles. But there are those particulars, in which, in modern times, themes of surpassing interest and importance are opened to the dramatic poet, which were of necessity unknown to the writers of antiquity ; and it is by blending the skilful use of these with the simplicity and pathos of the Greek originals, that the highest perfection of this noble art is to be attained.

In the first place, the Greeks had no idea whatever of a system of divine superintendence, or moral retribution, in this world. On the contrary, their ideas were just the reverse. FATE, superior to the decrees of Jove himself, was the supreme power which they discerned in all the changes of time ; and it was the crushing of a human soul beneath its chariot-wheels that they principally delighted to portray. The omnipotence of Fate, in their opinion, was more shown in the destruction than in the rewards of the good. Success in life they were willing enough to ascribe to the able conduct of the persons concerned ; they only began, like the French, to speak about destiny when they were unfortunate. Their ignorance of the fundamental principles of religion, familiar to every peasant in Europe, shines forth in every page of Sophocles and Euripides. The noblest tragedy of Æschylus, the *Prometheus Vincetus*, is intended to portray the highest divine benevolence, overpowered by supreme power, and eternally suffering under eternal injustice. The frequent overthrow of virtue by wickedness, of innocence by fraud, of gentleness by violence, in this world, seems to have produced an indelible impression on their minds. They not only had no confidence in the divine justice, or the ultimate triumph of virtue over vice, but they had the reverse. They had a mournful conviction that innocence in this vale of tears was everlastingly doomed to suffering ; that vice would eternally prove triumphant ; and that it was in inward strength and resolution that the only refuge for oppressed virtue was to be found. Their greatest philosophers thought the same. Their tragedies were dramatised Stoicism. Grandeur of character, force of mind, the indomitable will, might be portrayed to perfection under such a belief ; but the mild graces, the confidence in God, the resignation to His will, breathed into the human heart by the Gospel, were

unknown. What a volume of thoughts and sentiments, of virtues and graces, were wanting in a world to which faith, hope, and charity, were unknown! A dramatic Raphael was impossible in antiquity; it was the spirit of the Redeemer which inspired his *Holy Families*. Ancient morality, accordingly, is of a sterner cast than anything with which we are acquainted in modern times. They were full of admiration of the qualities which formed the patriot and the hero, and have portrayed them to perfection in their dramas; but they were ignorant of that more heavenly disposition of mind, which

“sits a blooming bride,
By Valour’s arm’d and awful side.”

They perceived the tendency of firm and unbending virtue to elevate the soul above all that is earthly; but they knew not, in the sublime language of Milton,

“That if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.”

As a necessary consequence of this, the dramas of antiquity were destitute of those feelings of PIETY, which form so important a part in the more elevated dramatic fictions of modern Europe. The ancients carried mere human virtue to the very highest point; in their poetry, their tragedies, their philosophy, they represented man standing on himself alone in the noblest aspect. But they were ignorant of God; they had no correct ideas of heaven. The devotion to the divine will, the forgetfulness of self, the reliance on supreme protection to innocence, the appeal to the Almighty, and the judgment of another world against the injustice of this, which run through the most exalted conceptions of modern times, were to them unknown. Their ideas of the celestial beings were entirely drawn from human models: Olympus was peopled by gods and goddesses, animated by passions, divided by jealousies, stimulated by desires entirely akin to those which are felt in this world. The shades below were a dark and gloomy region, the entrance to which was placed in the jaws of Vesuvius, or the dreary Cimmerian caves, through which the cries of the damned in Tartarus incessantly resounded; and where even the blessed spirits in Elysium were continually regretting the joys and excitement of the upper world. Dante, in his

Inferno, has painted to the life their prevailing ideas of futurity ; the next world to them contained nothing but successive circles of Malebolge. Homer has expressed them in a line, when he makes Achilles, in Elysium, say to Ulysses, on his descent to the infernal regions, that he would rather command the Grecian army one day, than dwell where he was through an infinity of ages. Compare this with the ideas of the Crusaders in modern Europe ; with the death of the chivalric Bayard, when mortally wounded, seated on the ground, with his eyes fixed on the cross of his sword, he said to the victorious Constable de Bourbon, “ Pity not me—pity those who fight against their king, their country, and their oath ! ”

Lastly, the passion of LOVE, as it is understood and felt in modern times, was unknown in antiquity ; and to those who reflect how important a part it bears in the romances and plays of Europe, this will probably appear like performing Hamlet with the character of the Prince of Denmark omitted on the occasion. It was impossible they could have it, because their manners were much more Oriental than European ; and young persons of opposite sexes rarely, if ever, met before marriage. They had a perfect idea of the mutual affection which arises after marriage ; the tenderness of Hector and Andromache never has been surpassed in any tongue. With the passions of the harem they were unhappily too familiar ; and the dreadful pangs of jealousy never have been painted with more consummate ability, or more thorough knowledge of human nature. Euripides, in particular, has delineated the terrible effects of that passion with a master’s hand, and speaks of it always with the utmost, one would say experienced, horror ; witness the raving of Medea at the desertion of Jason, the fury of Hermione at the captive Andromache. Love also, as it arises now in an Eastern seraglio, was not unknown to them ; the passion of Phædra for Hippolytus, as painted by Euripides, is a proof of it. But the love they thus conceived, had scarcely any resemblance to the passion of the same name, which has risen up with the general intercourse of the sexes, the influence of a purer religion, the abolition of polygamy, and the chivalrous manners of modern Europe. It is represented rather as a fever, as a fit of insanity, than

anything else; and is usually held forth as the withering blast inflicted by an offended deity, or the mania bequeathed as an inheritance of an accursed race. The refined and ennobling passion, so well known and exquisitely described by the great masters of the human heart in modern times, that of Othello for Desdemona, of Tancrede for Clorinda, of Corinne for Oswald, was unknown in antiquity. Even the passions described by Ovid, which arose amidst the freer manners of the Roman patricians, had little resemblance to the refined sentiments, the bequest of the age of chivalry: the one was founded on the subjugation of mind by the senses, the other on the oblivion of the senses in the mind. What a vast addition to the range and interest of the drama has the refining and spiritualising of this master-passion of the human breast, by the influence of Christianity and the institutions of chivalry, made; and how inexcusable does it render modern genius, if, with such an additional chord to touch in the human heart, it has never yet rivalled the great models of antiquity!

And has modern genius not yet equalled the master-pieces of the drama in ancient Greece? We answer, Decidedly not, either on the Continent or this country, any more than modern sculpture has rivalled the perfections of Grecian statuary. Neither in the old French and Italian school, which followed the ancient models, nor yet in the Romantic school in which old England and young France proposed to rival it, has anything approaching to the interest and pathos of the Athenian dramatists been produced. It is not difficult to see what have been the causes of this inferiority; and they seem to have been these:—

The regular drama of France was addressed, entirely and exclusively, to the court, the noble, and the highly educated classes. It was nothing more than an extension of the theatres of Versailles. The opinions of Louis XIV., his ministers or mistresses, of the Duke of Orleans, and a few leading nobles of the court, and one or two statesmen, were all in all. The approbation of the king stamped a tragedy in public opinion, as his dancing with her stamped the estimation of a new court beauty. The voice and feelings of the middle or lower ranks of society had no more to say on the subject than they had in the formation of court

dresses, or the etiquette of the *Œil de Bœuf*. They took their opinions from that of the magnates of the land, as milliners and tailors now do from the dresses of London and Paris. Rank and fashion were paramount in literature, as they are still in manners, dancing, and etiquette. It was impossible that the drama, addressed to, and having its success dependent on, the approbation of such an audience, could faithfully paint the human heart. The stately dames and haughty seigneurs of Versailles would have been shocked with the vehement bursts of passion, the pathetic traits of nature, the undisguised expression of feeling which appeared in Euripides and Sophocles, and entranced the mixed and more natural audience of Athens. It would have appeared vulgar and painful; it revealed what it was the great object of art and education to conceal, a naked human heart. The stately Alexandrine verses, the sonorous periods, the dignified and truly noble thoughts which so strongly characterise the French tragedies, arose naturally, and perhaps unavoidably, from the habits and tastes of the exclusive aristocratic circle to which they were addressed. In addition to this, the audience were all highly educated, at least according to the ideas and habits of the times. Classical images were those which recalled the most pleasing associations in every mind; classical events awakened the emotions most likely to prove generally attractive. The ancient models were before every mind, from the effect of early and universal education. Subjects and allusions connected with Greece and Rome were as unavoidable, as they now are in the prize poem of Oxford or Cambridge. Thus, the drama of Athens naturally was assumed as the model of modern imitation; but on it was ingrafted, not the vehemence and nature of the Greek originals, addressed to all mankind, but the measured march of heroic versification, intended for a narrow and dignified feudal circle.

Making allowance for this peculiarity, and considering the drama as, from this cause, diverted from its real object and highest flight, it is impossible to conceive anything more perfect than the masterpieces of the French stage. Corneille was their greatest composer; he had most original genius, and was least fettered by artificial rules. He was

the Æschylus of the French theatre. Voltaire said, that the king's ministers should be compelled to attend the performance of his finest pieces, to acquire the knowledge of human nature, and the statesmanlike views requisite for the government of man. Napoleon said, if Corneille had lived in his time, he would have made him a councillor of state; for he alone, of all writers, felt the overpowering importance of state necessity. The great Condé wept at the generosity of sentiment portrayed in his *Britannicus*. It is impossible to conceive anything more dignified and elevated, more calculated to rouse the generous and lofty feelings, to nourish that forgetfulness of self and devotion to others, which is the foundation of everything great and good in this world, than his finest tragedies. They are, however, very unequal. *Cinna*, *Les Horaces*, the *Cid*, *Polyeucte*, and *Rodogune*, are his masterpieces; it is they which have won for him, by the consent of all nations, the surname of "le Grand Corneille." But still it is not nature which is generally represented in his tragedies. It is an ideal nature, seven foot high, clad in impenetrable panoply, steeled against the weaknesses, as it is above the littlenesses, of humanity. Persons of a romantic, lofty tone of mind, will to the end of the world be fascinated by his pages; heroic resolutions, great deeds, will ever be prompted by his sentiments. But they are above the standard of common life: they evince a deep knowledge of human nature, but of human nature in noble and heroic bosoms only; and that is widely different from what obtains with ordinary men. Hence his pieces are little adapted for general representation; and, certainly, even the best translations of them never could succeed in this country.

Racine is a more general favourite than Corneille, because he paints feelings more commonly experienced; but he wants his great and heroic sentiments. No one ever thought of calling him the Great. Less deeply imbued with the lofty spirit of chivalry, less romantic in his structure, less commanding in his ideas, he is more polished, more equal, and has a greater command of the pathetic. He is to Corneille what Virgil was to Homer, what Raphael to Michael Angelo. The anguish of the human heart was what he chiefly loved to represent, because he felt that there he

excelled; and hence his tragedies are generally formed on the Greek model, and on the subjects already treated by Sophocles and Euripides. Agamemnon, Achilles, Alcestes, Orestes, Clytemnestra, Iphigenia, Œdipus, Hermione, Jocasta, Antigone, reappear on his pages as in those of the masters of the Greek drama. But they reappear in a modern dress. They are very different from the inimitable simplicity of the originals. The refinements, conceits, extravagant flattery, politeness, and stately manners of the Grand Monarque shine through every line. Achilles makes love to Iphigenia, as if she were in the marbled gardens of Versailles; the passion of Phèdre for Hippolyte is the refined effusion of modern delicacy, not the burning fever and maniac delirium of Phædra in Euripides. His Greek heroes and heroines address each other as if they were in the *Œil de Bœuf*; it is "monsieur" and "madame" at every step. Under classical names, and with the scene laid in distant lands, it is still the ancient *régime* of France which is portrayed in all his pieces; it is the passions and distresses of an old and highly civilised society which are depicted. Even *Athalie*, his masterpiece, has none of the ancient Jewish spirit in it; it is the modern priesthood which is represented as resisting oppression in the temple of Jerusalem. But the beauty of language, the melody of versification, the delicacy of sentiments, the frequent touches of the pathetic which his writings exhibit, will for ever secure him a high place in the opinion of men; and justify the saying of Voltaire, that whoever would acquire a pure and elegant French style, must have the *Petit Carême* of Massillon, and the *Athalie* of Racine, constantly lying on his writing-table.

Voltaire, though he adhered, in part at least, to the old subjects in his tragedies, is far more various and discursive in his mode of treating them. The prodigious fecundity of the author of a hundred volumes, the varied acquisitions of the philosopher, the historian, the satirist, the moralist, give diversity to his subjects, and an endless variety to his ideas. He possessed, as it were, a polyglot mind; he threw himself into the feelings and passions of every country and every age, and brought out in his dramas part at least of the inexhaustible store of human thoughts and events which have

from the beginning of time agitated the human race. The East, with its sultans, its harems, its sultanas, and its jealousies, strongly arrested his imagination, and furnished the subjects of some of his finest pieces ; witness *Mahomet*, *Bajazet*, *Tamerlane*, and *Zaïre*. For this reason his tragedies are more general favourites now than those of either Corneille or Racine ; you will see the audience in the parterre of the Theatre Français repeating whole speeches from *Brutus*, *Alzire*, or *Le Fanatisme*, after the performer on the stage. They have sunk deeper into the general mind than any of their predecessors ; more of their lines have become household expressions, as is the case with Shakspeare, Gray, and Campbell in England, than those of any other author in the French language. Voltaire, too, was strongly impressed with the necessity of keeping up the interest of his piece from first to last : he drives on the story with an untiring hand ; and even before the final catastrophe, contrives to produce a passing excitement at every step, by subordinate and yet important events. What he constantly complains of in his admirable commentaries on Corneille is, that, in his inferior pieces at least, that great master lets the story flag, the interest die away, and that, trusting to the fascination of his language and the power of his thoughts, he neglects the important matters of dramatic power and stage effect. His perfect knowledge of both these important auxiliaries of his art, is not the least of Voltaire's many excellences ; and has secured for him, to all appearance permanently, if not the first, unquestionably the most popular place in the French theatre. But still his dramas do not represent nature. They are noble pieces of rhetoric put into rhyme. They are the ablest possible debate arrayed in the pomp of Alexandrine verse. But they do not touch the heart like a few words in Sophocles, Euripides, or Shakspeare.

Metastasio was fettered by a double set of rules ; for he was compelled to attend at once to the dramatic unities of Aristotle, and the musical restraints of the opera. It was no common genius which, amidst such difficulties, could produce a series of dramas which should not merely charm the world, when arrayed in the enchanted garb of the opera, with all the attractions of music and scenery, but form a perpetual subject of pleasing study to the recluse, far from

the pomp and magnificence of theatric representation. It is impossible to imagine anything more attractive than his dramas considered as visionary pieces. Formed on the events of the ancient world, he depicts under the name of Alexander, Titus, Dido, Regulus, Cæsar, and Cleopatra, ideal beings having about as much resemblance to real mortals as the nymphs of the ballet have to ordinary women, or the recitative of Mozart to the human voice. But still they are very charming. If they are not a portrait of this world, they are a vision of something above it ; of a scene in which the littlenesses and selfishness of mortality are forgotten ; in which virtue is generally in the end triumphant ; in which honour in women proves victorious over love, and fortitude in men obtains the mastery of fortune—generosity and magnanimity beyond what could have been even conceived, often furnishes the *dénouement* of the piece, and extricates the characters from apparently insurmountable difficulties. There can be no doubt this is not human life : Alexander the Great, Dido, Regulus, are not of every day's occurrence. But the total departure of such representations from the standard of reality, appears less reprehensible in the opera than in the ordinary theatre, because the singing and recitative at any rate take it out of the pale of mortality. We take up one of his dramas as we go to the opera, not to see any picture of actual existence, or anything which shall recall the experienced feelings of the human heart, but to be charmed by a fairy tale, which, if it does not paint the stern realities of life, at least charms by its imagination.

The more impassioned mind and vehement passions of Alfieri disdained those trammels by which the French and Italian stages had so long been fettered. Gifted by nature with an ardent imagination, impetuous feelings, deep and lasting emotions, he early saw that the modern drama, founded on, and fettered by, the strict observance of the Greek unities, and yet discarding its broken and rapid diction, its profound knowledge of the human heart, its vehement expression of passion, had departed far from the real object of the art, and could not be brought back to it, but by a total change of system. He has himself told us, in his most interesting life, that when he read the tragedies

of Racine and Corneille, the book fell from his hands. They conveyed no idea whatever of reality ; they had no resemblance to the ardent feelings which he felt burning in his own breast. Anxiously seeking vent for passions too fierce to be controlled, he found it in the study of the Greek drama. The wrath of Medea, the heroism of Antigone, the woes of Andromache, the love of Phædra, found a responsive echo in his bosom ; they combined everything he could desire, they painted everything that he felt. He saw what tragedy had been—what it ought to be. His taste was immediately formed on the true model. When he came to write tragedies himself, he composed them on the plan of Sophocles. He did more. He made the language as brief, the voice of passion as powerful, the plot as simple ; but he brought even fewer characters on the stage. He trusted entirely to the force of passion, the wail of suffering, the accents of despair. Immense was the effect of this recurrence to unsophisticated feeling, in a luxurious and effeminate society. It was like the burst of admiration with which the picture of the human heart was at the same time hailed in France, by the magic hand of Rousseau ; or with which, in the next age, the fierce passions of the melodramatic corsairs of Byron were received in the artificial circles of London society. Nature was something new ; they had never heard her voice before.

Had Alfieri, with this ardent mind and clear perception of the true end of the drama, possessed that *general* knowledge of the human heart, and of human character in all its bearings, which the Greek dramatists possessed, he would have formed the greatest tragedian of modern continental Europe. But in these vital particulars he was very deficient. His position in society, character, and habits, precluded him from acquiring it. The dissipated heartless nobleman, who flew from one devoted passion to another, without the slightest compunction as to their effects on the objects of his adoration ; who fought Lord Ligonier in the Park, in pursuance of an intrigue with his lady ; and stole from the Pretender his Queen, when age and dissipation had wellnigh brought that prince to the grave ; who traversed, post-haste, France and Italy, with fourteen blood-horses,

which he wore out in his impetuous course—was not likely either to feel the full force of the generous, or paint the *real* features of the selfish passions. He did not mingle with the ordinary world on a footing of *equality*. This it is which ever makes aristocratic and high-bred authors deficient in the one thing needful, in history or the drama—a knowledge of human nature. No man ever learned that, who had not been practically brought into collision with men in all ranks, from the highest to the lowest. Hence his characters are almost all overdrawn. Madame de Stael has very justly observed that in his tragedies vice and virtue are exhibited in too undisguised colours; the malignity of the wicked is laid too bare to the reader. He makes the depraved *admit they are bad, but yet persevere in their crimes*; a certain proof that he did not know the human heart. He knew it better who said, “The heart is *deceitful above all things*, and desperately wicked.” Napoleon knew it better when he said to Talma, after seeing his representation of Nero in *Britannicus*—“You are quite wrong in your idea of Nero; you should *conceal the tyrant*. No man admits he was guilty either to himself or others.” Alfieri himself is a proof of it: he recounts, in his life, many criminal acts he had committed, but never with the slightest allusion to their having been wrong. He admitted, later in life, that he had been ignorant of human nature in the great body of mankind; for he said, on recounting the horrors of the 10th August, which he had witnessed at Paris—“*Je connais bien les grands, mais je ne connais pas les petits.*”

It is hard to say whether Schiller belongs to the Greek or Romantic school in the drama. His subjects are in great part chosen from the latter class: he changes the scene, and did not hold himself bound by the rules of Aristotle. But in his mode of treating these subjects, he approaches more nearly to the tragedians of antiquity. He utterly discarded the limited range of subjects and measured pomp of the French drama; he felt that the world had grown old since the days of Euripides, and that it was time for tragedy to embrace a wider range of subjects than the family disasters which followed the return of the Greeks from the siege of Troy. He knew that it was not in stately rhyme or

measured cadences that passion finds vent from the human breast. He was essentially historical in his ideas. The past, with its vast changes, and endless variety of events, lay open before him. And he availed himself of all its riches. He is unequalled in the ability with which he threw himself into his subject, identified himself, not merely with the characters, but with the periods in which they arose, and brought before the mind of the spectators the ideas, interests, passions, and incidents, the collision of which produced the catastrophe which formed the immediate subject of his piece. The best-informed English or Scottish historians will have something to learn on the history of Queen Mary from the incomparable summary of arguments for and against her detention in captivity by Queen Elizabeth, in the two first acts of his noble tragedy of *Mary Stuart*. The learned Spaniard will find himself transported to the palace of the Escorial, and the frightful tragedies of its bigoted court, in his terrible tragedy of *Don Carlos*. Schiller rivals Shakspeare himself in the energy with which, by a word or an epithet, he paints the fiercest or tenderest passions of the heart: witness the devoted love of Thekla for Max in *Wallenstein*; or the furious jealousy of the Queen in *Don Carlos*. He has not the grotesque of Shakspeare; we do not see in his tragedies that mixture of the burlesque and the sublime which is so common in the Bard of Avon, and is not unfrequent with the greatest minds, who play, as it were, with the thunderbolts, and love to show how they can master them. Hence, in reading at least, his dramas produce a more uniform and unbroken impression than those of the great Englishman, and will, with foreign nations at least, command a more general admiration. But the great charm in Schiller is the romantic turn of mind, the noble elevation of sentiment, the truly heroic spirit, with which his tragedies abound. In reading them, we feel that a new intellectual soil has been turned up in the Fatherland; the human soul, in its pristine purity and beauty, comes forth from beneath his hand; it re-appears like the exquisite remains of Grecian statuary, which, buried for ages in superincumbent ruins, emerge pure and unstained as virgin snow, when a renewal of cultivation has again exposed them to the light. If he

was equally great at all times, he would have been the most perfect dramatist of modern times. But he is far from being so. At times he is tedious ; often dull. It is his great scenes, such as the last sacrament of Queen Mary, which have gained for him his colossal reputation, and produce an indelible impression on the mind of his reader.

THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

[BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, AUGUST 1838]

THE history of Rome will remain, to the latest age of the world, the most attractive, the most useful, and the most elevating subject of human contemplation. It must ever form the basis of a liberal and enlightened education; it must ever present the most important object to the contemplation of the statesman; it must ever exhibit the most heart-stirring record to the heart of the soldier. Modern civilisation, the arts and the arms, the freedom and the institutions of Europe around us, are the bequest of the Roman legions. The roads which we travel are, in many places, those which these indomitable pioneers of civilisation first cleared through the wilderness of nature; the language which we speak is more than half derived from Roman words; the laws by which we are protected have found their purest fountains in the treasures of Roman jurisprudence; the ideas in which we glory are to be found traced out in the fire of young conception in the Roman writers. In vain does the superficial acquirement or shallow vanity of modern liberalism seek to throw off the weight of obligation to the grandeur or virtue of antiquity; in vain are we told that useful knowledge is alone worthy of cultivation, that ancient fables have gone past, and that the study of physical science should supersede that of the Greek or Roman authors. Experience, the great detector of error, is perpetually recalling to our minds the inestimable importance of Roman history. The more that our

History of Rome. By THOMAS ARNOLD, D.D., Head-Master of Rugby School; late Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford; and Member of the Archæological Society of Rome. London: B. Fellowes. 1838.

institutions become liberalised, the more rapid the strides which democracy makes amongst us, the more closely do we cling to the annals of a state which underwent exactly the same changes, and suffered the consequences of the same convulsions; and the more that we experience the insecurity, the selfishness, and the rapacity of democratic ambition, the more highly do we come to appreciate the condensed wisdom with which the great historians of antiquity, by a word or an epithet, stamped its character or revealed its tendency.

There is something solemn, and evidently providential, in the unbroken advance and ultimate boundless dominion of Rome. The history of other nations corresponds nearly to the vicissitudes of prosperity and disaster, of good and evil fortune, which we observe in the nations of the world at this time. The brilliant meteor of Athenian greatness disappeared from the world almost as soon as the bloody phantasmagoria of the French Revolution. In half a century after they arose, naught remained of either but the works of genius they had produced, and the deeds of glory they had done. The wonders of Napoleon's reign faded as rapidly as the triumphs of the Macedonian Conqueror; and the distant lustre of Babylon and Nineveh is faintly recalled by the ephemeral dynasties which have arisen, under the pressure of Arabian or Mogul conquest, in the regions of the East in modern times. But, in the Roman annals, a different and mightier system develops itself. From the infancy of the Republic, from the days even of the kings, and the fabulous reigns of Romulus and Numa, an unbroken progress is exhibited, which never experienced a permanent reverse till the eagles of the Republic had crossed the Euphrates, and all the civilised world, from the wall of Antoninus to the foot of Mount Atlas, was subjected to its arms. Their reverses, equally with their triumphs—their defeats, equally with their victories—their infant struggles with the cities of Latium, not less than their later contests with Carthage and Mithridates—contributed to develop their strength, and may be regarded as the direct causes of their dominion. It was in the long wars with the Etruscan and Samnite communities that the discipline and tactics were slowly and painfully acquired, which

enabled them to face the banded strength of the Carthaginian confederacy,—and in the desperate struggle with Hannibal that the resolution and skill were drawn forth, which so soon, on its termination, gave them the empire of the world. The durability of the fabric was in proportion to the tardiness of its growth, and the solidity of its materials. The twelve vultures which Romulus beheld on the Palatine Hill were emblematic of the twelve centuries which beheld the existence of the empire of the West; and it required a thousand years more of corruption and decline to extinguish in the East this brilliant empire, which, regenerated by the genius of Constantine, found, in the riches and matchless situation of Byzantium, a counterpoise to all the effeminacy of Oriental manners, and all the ferocity of the Scythian tribes.

It is remarkable that time has not yet produced a history of this wonderful people commensurate either to their dignity, their importance, or their intimate connexion with modern institutions. The pictured pages and matchless descriptions of Livy, indeed, will, to the end of the world, fascinate the imagination and subdue the hearts of men; but it is a fragment only of his great work which has descended to our times; and even when complete, it came down only to the time of Augustus, and broke off exactly at the period when nations, arrived at the stage of existence to which we have grown, are most interested in its continuance. The condensed wisdom, energetic expressions, and practical experience of Sallust and Tacitus, apply only to detached periods of the later annals; and, though not a page of their immortal works can be read without suggesting reflections on the extraordinary political sagacity which they had acquired from experience, or received from nature, yet we shall look in vain, in the fragments of their works which have survived the wreck of time, for a connected detail even of the later periods of Roman story. The moderns appear to have been deterred, by the exquisite beauty of these fragments of ancient history, from adventuring at all on the same field. Ferguson's is considered by the English, and admitted by the Germans, to be the best connected history of the Republic which exists; but not only does it embrace merely, with adequate fulness,

the period from the rise of the Gracchi to the ascent of the throne by Augustus, but it does not contain the views, nor is it dictated by the practical acquaintance with human affairs, which is necessary for a real history of Roman policy. The Scotch professor has, with much ability, illustrated the contests of Sylla and Marius, of Cæsar and Pompey; but he lived in a pacific age, amidst the unbroken seclusion of an academical life, and, consequently, could not possibly attain those clear and decisive views of the tendency and springs of action, in civil contests, which are brought home to the minds of the most illiterate by the storms and crimes of a revolution.

Niebuhr is universally allowed to have opened a new era in the early history of the Republic. Before his time, historians were content with adopting, without examination, the legends which, in the Roman annals, passed for the narrative of real events, and, despairing of adding anything to their beauty, simply presented their readers with a translation of Livy and Dionysius. Dissatisfied with such a mode of recording the progress of so celebrated a people, Ferguson rejected the early legends altogether, and passing, in the most cursory manner, over the first five hundred years of Roman story, professed himself unable to discover firm historic ground till he came down to the second Punic War. But neither of these methods of treating the subject suited the searching eye and inquisitive mind of the German historian. Possessed of extraordinary learning, and a matchless faculty of drawing, with intuitive sagacity, important historical and political conclusions from detached and, to ordinary observers, unmeaning details of subordinate historians, he has contrived to rear up from comparatively authentic data a veracious picture of the early Roman annals. Instead of rejecting in despair the whole history prior to the invasion of the Gauls as a mass of fables, originated by the vanity of Patrician families, and adopted by the credulity of an uninformed people, he has succeeded in supporting a large portion of those annals by unquestionable evidence; and stripping it only, in some parts, of those colours which the eloquence of Livy has rendered immortal, for the improvement and delight of mankind. It is a common reproach against this great antiquary, that he has

overthrown the whole early history of Rome; but no reproach was ever more unfounded. In truth, as Dr Arnold has justly observed, it must be evident to every one acquainted with the subject, that he has built up much more than he has destroyed, and fixed on firmer historic grounds a vast deal which the inquisitive eye of modern scepticism was inclined to lay aside as entirely fictitious. No stronger proof of this can be desired than is to be found in the fact that, while Ferguson began his history as authentic only with the exploits of Hannibal, Niebuhr has deemed it certain that historical truth is to be found not only under the kings, but so early as Ancus Martius.

It is inconceivable, indeed, how it ever could have been seriously believed that the annals of the kings were entirely fictitious, when the Cloaca Maxima still exists, a durable monument both of the grandeur of conception and power of execution which at that early period had distinguished the Roman people. Two thousand five hundred years have elapsed since this stupendous work was executed, to drain the waters of the Forum and adjacent hollows to the Tiber; and there it stands at this day, without a stone displaced, still performing its destined service! Do any of the edifices of Paris or London promise an equal duration? From the moment that we beheld that magnificent structure, formed of the *actual stone* of the Eternal City, all doubts as to the authenticity of Roman annals, so far, at least, as they portray a powerful flourishing kingdom anterior to the Republic, vanished from our minds. If nothing else remained to attest the greatness of the kings at this period but the Cloaca Maxima and the treaty with Carthage in the first year of the Republic, it would be sufficient to demonstrate that the basis of the early history of the kings was to be found in real events. And this Niebuhr, after the most minute and critical examination, has declared to be his conviction.

Doubtless, the same historic evidence does not exist for the romantic and captivating part of early Roman history. We cannot assert that we have good evidence that Romulus fought, or that Numa prayed; that Ancus conquered, or that Tarquin oppressed; that the brethren of the Horatii saved their country, or that Curtius leaped headlong into the gulf in the Forum. The exquisite story of Lucretia;

the heart-stirring legend of Coriolanus ; the invasion of Porsenna, the virtue of Cincinnatus, the siege of Veii, the deliverance of Camillus, are probably all founded in some degree on real events, but have come down to our times glowing with the genius of the ancient historians, and gilded by the colours which matchless eloquence has communicated to the additions with which the fondness of national or family vanity had clothed the artless narrative of early times. Simplicity is the invariable characteristic of the infancy of the world. Homer and Job are often in the highest degree both pathetic and sublime ; but they are so, just because they are utterly unconscious of any such merits, and aimed only at the recital of real events. The glowing pages and beautiful episodes of Livy are as evidently subsequent additions as the pomp and majesty of Ossian are to the meagre ballads of Caledonia.

But it is of no moment either to the great objects of historical inquiry or to the future improvement and elevation of the species, whether the Roman legends can or cannot be supported by historical evidence. It is sufficient that they *exist* to render them to the end of the world the most delightful subject of study for youth, and not the least useful matter for contemplation in maturer years. They may not be strictly historical, but rely upon it they are founded in the main upon a correct picture of the manners and ideas of the time. Amadis of Gaul is not a true story, but it conveys, nevertheless, a faithful though exaggerated picture of the ideas and manners of the chivalrous ages. There is, probably, the same truth in the Roman legends that there is in Achilles and Agamemnon—in Front-de-Bœuf, Richard Cœur-de-Lion, and Ivanhoe. There may not have existed in Roman story a real Lucretia or Virginia, any more than in British history a genuine Rebecca or Jeanie Deans ; but the characters are not the less founded in the actual manners and spirit of the times. It is of little moment to us whether Romulus watched the twelve emblematic vultures on the Palatine Hill, or Numa consulted Egeria in the shades of the Campagna, or Veii was stormed through the mine sprung in the temple of Juno, or the Roman ambassador thrust his hand into the fire before Porsenna, or Lucretia, though guiltless in intent, plunged the dagger in her bosom

rather than survive the honour of her house. It is sufficient that a people have existed, to whom the patriotic devotion, the individual heroism, the high resolves, the undaunted resolution portrayed in these immortal episodes, were so familiar, that they had come to be regarded as real, because they were felt to be probable, and thus formed part of their traditional annals. No other people ever possessed early legends of the same noble heart-stirring kind as the Romans, because none other were stamped with the character destined to win, and worthy to hold, the empire of the world. To the latest times the history of infant Rome, with all its attendant legends, must, therefore, form the most elevating and useful subject for the instruction of youth, as affording a faithful picture, if not of the actual events of that interesting period, at least of the ideas and feelings then prevalent amongst a nation called to such exalted destinies ; and without being imbued with a similar spirit, we may safely assert no other people will ever either emulate their fame, or approach to their achievements.

Notwithstanding the high place which we have assigned to Niebuhr in the elucidation and confirmation of early Roman history, nothing can be more apparent than that his work never will take its place as a popular history of the Republic, and never rival in general estimation the fascinating pages of Livy. No one can read it for half an hour without being satisfied of that fact. Invaluable to the scholar, the antiquary, the philologist, it has no charms for the great mass of readers, and conveys no sort of idea to the unlearned student of the consecutive events, among the very people whose history it professes to portray. In this respect it labours under the same fault which is, in a less degree, conspicuous in the philosophic pages of Sir James Mackintosh's English history ; that it pre-supposes an intimate acquaintance with the subject in the reader, and is to all, not nearly as well versed in it as himself, either in great part unintelligible, or intolerably dull. Heeren, whose labours have thrown such a flood of light on the Persian, Egyptian, and Carthaginian states, has justly remarked that Niebuhr, with all his acuteness, is to be regarded rather as an essayist on history, than an actual historian. He has elucidated with extraordinary learning and skill several of the most

obscure subjects in Roman annals ; and on many, especially the vital one of the Agrarian law, has struck out new lights, which, if known at all to the later writers of the Empire, had been entirely lost during the change of manners and ideas consequent on the Gothic conquests. But his work is in many places so obscure, and so much overloaded with names, and subjects, and disquisitions, in great part new to readers, even of fair classical attainments and extensive general knowledge, that it never can take its place among the standard histories of the world. He is totally destitute of two qualities indispensable to a great historian, and particularly conspicuous in the far-famed annalists of antiquity—powers of description, and the discriminating eye, which, touching on every subject, brings those prominently forward only which, from their intrinsic importance, should attract the attention of the reader. He works out everything with equal care and minuteness, and, in consequence, the impression produced on the mind of an ordinary reader is so confused, as to amount almost to nothing. Like the well-known painters Perelle or Waterloo, in the imitation of nature, (and landscape-painting and historical description, in this particular, are governed by the same principles,) he works out the details of each individual object with admirable skill ; but there is no *breadth* or general effect on his canvass, and he wants the general shade and subdued tones, which in Claude, amidst an infinity of details, not less faithfully portrayed, rivet the eye of the spectator on a few brilliant spots, and produce on the mind, even of the most unskilled, the charm of a single emotion.

Niebuhr's history, however, with all its merits and defects, comes only down to the commencement of the most important era in the annals of the Republic. It is in the Empire that the great want of continued annals is felt. Literally speaking, there is nothing, either in ancient or modern literature, which deserves the name of a history of the whole period of the Emperors. Tillemont has, with unwearied industry and admirable accuracy, collected all that the inimitable fragments of Tacitus, and detached lights of Seutonius, Florus, and the panegyrists have left on this vast subject ; and Gibbon has, in his first chapters, with incomparable talent, thrown over the general condition of the empire the

light of his genius and the colouring of his eloquence. But Tillemont, though a laborious and valuable compiler, is no historian ; if any one doubts this, let him take up one of his elaborate quartos and try to read it. Gibbon, in his immortal work, the greatest monument of historical industry and ability that exists in the world, has given a most luminous view of the events which led to the decline and fall of the empire, and erected with consummate talent a bridge across the gulf which separates ancient from modern story. But he begins only to narrate events with any minuteness at the period when the empire had already attained to its highest elevation ; he dismisses in a few pages the conquests of Trajan, the wisdom of Nerva, the beneficence of Marcus Aurelius, and enters into detail for the first time when the blind partiality of Marcus Antoninus, and the guilt of his empress, had prepared, in the accession and vices of Commodus, the commencement of that long series of depraved emperors who brought about the ruin of the empire. Would that the pencil of the author of the *Decline and Fall* had thrown over them the brilliant light which it has shed over the disasters of Julian, the storming of Constantinople, the conquests of Mahomet, or the obstinate wars of the Byzantine emperors with the Parthian princes. But his history embraces so vast a range of objects, that it could not satisfy our curiosity on the annals even of the people who formed the centre of the far-extended group, and it is rather a picture of the progress of the nations who overthrew Rome, than of Rome itself.

There is ample room, therefore, for a great historical work, as voluminous and as eloquent as Gibbon, on the *Rise and Progress* of Roman greatness ; and it embraces topics of far more importance, in the present age of the world, than the succession of disasters and fierce barbarian inroads which long shook, and at last overturned the enduring fabric of the empire. Except as a matter of curiosity, we have little connexion with the progress of the Gothic and Scythian nations. Christianity has turned the rivers of barbarism by their source ; civilisation has overspread the wilds of Scythia ; gunpowder and fortified towns have given knowledge a durable superiority over ignorance ; Russia stands as an impenetrable barrier between

Europe and the Tartar horse. But the evils which the Roman institutions contained in their own bosom, as well as the deeds of glory and extent of dominion to which they led, interest us in the most vital particulars. Our institutions more closely resemble theirs than those of any other people recorded in history, and the causes which have led to the vast extent of our dominion and durability of our power, are the same which gave them for centuries the empire of the world. The same causes of weakness, also, are now assailing us which once destroyed them. We, too, have wealth imported from all parts of the world to corrupt our manners, and an overgrown metropolis to spread the seeds of vice and effeminacy, as from a common centre, over the length and breadth of the land. We, too, have patricians striving to retain power handed down to them by their ancestors, and plebeians burning with the desire of distinction, and the passion for political elevation which springs from the spread of wealth among the middle classes. We, too, have Gracchi ready to hoist the standard of disunion by raising the question of the Agrarian law, and Syllas and Mariuses to rear their hostile banners at the head of the aristocratic and democratic factions. In the womb of time is provided for us, as for them, the final overthrow of our liberties, under the successful leader of the popular party, and long ages of decline under the despotic rule imposed upon us by the blind ambition and Eastern equality of the people. A fair and philosophic history of Rome, therefore, is a subject of incalculable importance to the citizens of this, and of every other constitutional monarchy. In their errors we may discern the mirror of our own—in their misfortunes the prototypes of those we are likely to undergo—in their fate, that which, in all human probability, awaits ourselves.

Such a history never, in modern times, could have been written but at this period. All subsequent ages, from the days of Cicero, have been practically ignorant of the very elements of political knowledge requisite for a right understanding or fair discussion of the subject. In vain were the lessons of political wisdom to be found profusely scattered through the Roman historians—in vain did Sallust and Tacitus point, by a word or an epithet, to the important

conclusions deducible from their civil convulsions ;—the practical experience, the daily intercourse with Republican institutions were wanting, which were necessary to give the due weight to their reflections. The lessons of political wisdom were so constantly brought home to the citizens of antiquity by the storms and dissensions of the Forum, that they deemed it unnecessary to do more than allude to them, as a subject on which all were agreed, and with which every one was familiar. Like first principles in our House of Commons, they were universally taken for granted, and, therefore, were never made the theme of serious illustration. It is now only that we begin to perceive the weighty sense and condensed wisdom of many expressions which dropped seemingly unconsciously from their historical writers, that dear-bought experience has taught us that pride, insolency, and corrupt principle are the main sources of popular ambition in our times, as in the days of Catiline ; and that the saying of Johnson ceases to pass for a witty paradox, “Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel.”

Dr Arnold has now fairly set himself to work upon this noble task, and he is, in many respects, peculiarly fitted for the undertaking. Long known to the classical world as an accomplished scholar, and the learned editor of the best edition of Thucydides extant, he is still more familiar to many of our readers as the energetic headmaster of Rugby school ; and is to this hour looked up to with mingled sentiments of respect and affection by many of the most celebrated characters of the age. The first volume of the noble work in which he is engaged is alone published, which brings down the history of the Republic to the burning of Rome by the Gauls ; but it affords a fair specimen of the spirit and ability with which the remainder is likely to be carried on. In many respects he has shown himself admirably fitted for the great but difficult task which he has undertaken. His classical attainments, both in Greek and Roman literature, are of the very highest order ; his industry is indefatigable, and he possesses much of that instinctive glance or natural sagacity which enabled Niebuhr, amidst the fictions and chaos of ancient annals, to fix at once on the outlines of truth and the course of real events. His powers of description are of no ordinary kind, as our readers will

at once perceive from the extracts we are about to lay before them ; and many of his reflections prove that he is endowed with that faculty of drawing general conclusions from particular events, which, when not pushed too far, is the surest sign of the real genius for philosophical history.

Dr Arnold, it is well known, is a Whig—perhaps, we may add, an ultra-Liberal. So far from objecting to his book on this account, we hail it with the more satisfaction that it does come from an author of such principles, and therefore that it can safely be referred to as a work in which the truth of ancient events is not likely to be disguised or perverted to answer the views at least of the Conservative party in Great Britain. We are satisfied from *many* instances in the volume before us, that he is of an inquiring, searching turn of mind, and that he would deem himself dishonoured if he concealed or altered any well-ascertained facts in Roman history. More than this we do not desire. We not only do not dislike, we positively enjoy, his occasional introduction of liberal views in what we may call *Roman politics*. We see in this the best guarantee that the decisive instances against democratic principles, with which all ancient history, and, most of all, Roman history, abounds, will not be perverted in his hands, and may be relied on as authentic facts against his principles. Provided a writer is candid, ingenuous, and liberal, we hold it perfectly immaterial to the ultimate triumph of truth what is the shade of his political opinions. The cause is not worth defending which cannot be supported by the testimony of an honest opponent. Every experienced lawyer knows the value of a conscientious but unwilling witness. Enough is to be found in its apologist, Thiers, to doom the French Revolution to the eternal execration of mankind. There is no writer on America who has brought forward such a host of facts decisive against republican institutions as Miss Martineau, whom the Liberals extol as the only author who has given a true account of the Transatlantic democracy ; and we desire no other witness but Dr Arnold to the facts which demonstrate that it was the extravagant pretensions and ambition of the commons which in the end proved fatal to the liberties of Rome.

The Campagna of Rome, the fields of Latium, the Alban

Mount, the Palatine Hill, were familiar to the childhood of us all ; and not the least delightful hours of the youth of many of us have been spent in exploring the realities of that enchanting region. We transcribe with pleasure Dr Arnold's animated and correct description of it, drawn from actual observation with the hand of a master—

“The territory of the original Rome during its first period, the true *Ager Romanus*, could be gone round in a single day. It did not extend beyond the Tiber at all, nor probably beyond the Anio ; and on the east and south, where it had most room to spread, its limit was between five and six miles from the city. This *Ager Romanus* was the exclusive property of the Roman people, that is of the houses ; it did not include the lands conquered from the Latins, and given back to them again when the Latins became the plebs or commons of Rome. According to the augurs, the *Ager Romanus* was a peculiar district in a religious sense ; auspices could be taken within its bounds which could be taken nowhere without them.

“And now what was Rome, and what was the country around it, which have both acquired an interest such as can cease only when earth itself shall perish ? The hills of Rome are such as we rarely see in England, low in height, but with steep and rocky sides. In early times the natural wood still remained in patches amidst the buildings, as at this day it grows here and there on the green sides of the Monte Testaceo. Across the Tiber the ground rises to a greater height than that of the Roman hills, but its summit is a level unbroken line ; while the heights, which opposite to Rome itself rise immediately from the river, under the names of Janiculus and Vaticanus, then sweep away to some distance from it, and return in their highest and boldest form at the Mons Marius, just above the Milvian bridge and the Flaminian road. Thus to the west the view is immediately bounded ; but to the north and north-east the eye ranges over the low ground of the Campagna to the nearest line of the Apennines, which closes up, as with a gigantic wall, all the Sabine, Latin, and Volscian lowlands, while over it are still distinctly to be seen the high summits of the central Apennines, covered with snow, even at this day, for more than six months in the year. South and south-west lies the wide plain of the Campagna ; its level line succeeded by the equally level line of the sea, which can only be distinguished from it by the brighter light reflected from its waters. Eastward, after ten miles of plain, the view is bounded by the Alban hills, a cluster of high bold points rising out of the Campagna, like Arran from the sea, on the highest of which, at nearly the same height with the summit of Helvellyn, stood the Temple of Jupiter Latiaris, the scene of the common worship of all the people of the Latin name. Immediately under this highest point lies the crater-like basin of the Alban lake ; and on its nearer rim might be seen the trees of the grove of Ferentia, where the Latins held the great civil assemblies of their nation. Further to the north, on the edge of the Alban hills, looking towards Rome, was the town and citadel of Tusculum ; and beyond this, a lower summit, crowned with the walls and towers of Labicum, seems to connect the Alban hills with the line of the Apennines just at the spot where the citadel of Præneste, high up on the mountain-side, marks the opening into the country of the Hernicians, and into the valleys of the streams that feed the Liris.

“Returning nearer to Rome, the lowland country of the Campagna is broken by long green swelling ridges, the ground rising and falling, as in the heath country of Surrey and Berkshire. The streams are dull and sluggish, but the hill-sides above them constantly break away into little rocky cliffs, where on every ledge the wild fig now strikes out its branches,

and tufts of broom are clustering, but which in old times formed the natural strength of the citadels of the numerous cities of Latium. Except in these narrow dells, the present aspect of the country is all bare and desolate, with no trees nor any human habitation. But anciently, in the time of the early kings of Rome, it was full of independent cities, and, in its population and the careful cultivation of its little garden-like farms, must have resembled the most flourishing parts of Lombardy or the Netherlands."

We have already adverted to the difficulty of determining where fiction ends and real history begins in the early Roman annals, and the scanty foundation there is in authentic records for any of the early legends of their history. Fully alive, however, to the exquisite beauty of these remains, and the influence they had on the Roman history, as well as their importance as evincing the lofty character of the infant people, Dr Arnold has adopted the plan of not rejecting them altogether, but giving them in a simple narrative, something like the Bible, and commencing with his ordinary style when he arrives at events which really rest on historic ground. This is certainly much better than entirely rejecting them ; but, at the same time, it introduces a quaint style of writing, in recounting these early events, to which we can hardly reconcile ourselves, after the rich colouring and graphic hand of Livy. As an example of the way in which he treats this interesting but difficult part of his subject, we give his account of the story of Lucretia, the exquisite episode with which Livy terminates his first book and narrative of the kings of Rome—

"Now when they came back to Rome, King Tarquinius was at war with the people of Ardea ; and as the city was strong, his army lay a long while before it, till it should be forced to yield through famine. So the Romans had leisure for feasting and for diverting themselves ; and once Titus and Aruns were supping with their brother Sextus, and their cousin Tarquinius of Collatia was supping with them. And they disputed about their wives, whose wife of them all was the worthiest lady. Then said Tarquinius of Collatia, 'Let us go, and see with our own eyes what our wives are doing, so shall we know which is the worthiest.' Upon this they all mounted their horses, and rode first to Rome ; and there they found the wives of Titus, and of Aruns, and of Sextus, feasting and making merry. Then they rode on to Collatia, and it was late in the night ; but they found Lucretia, the wife of Tarquinius of Collatia, neither feasting, nor yet sleeping, but she was sitting with all her handmaids around her, and all were working at the loom. So when they saw this, they all said, 'Lucretia is the worthiest lady.' And she entertained her husband and his kinsmen, and after that they rode back to the camp before Ardea.

"But a spirit of wicked passion seized upon Sextus, and a few days afterwards he went alone to Collatia, and Lucretia received him hospitably, for he was her husband's kinsman. At midnight he arose and went to her

chamber, and he said that if she yielded not to him he would slay her and one of her slaves with her, and would say to her husband that he had slain her in her adultery. So when Sextus had accomplished his wicked purpose, he went back again to the camp.

“Then Lucretia sent in haste to Rome, to pray that her father Spurius Lucretius would come to her; and she sent to Ardea to summon her husband. Her father brought along with him Publius Valerius, and her husband brought with him Lucius Junius, whom men called Brutus. When they arrived, they asked earnestly, ‘Is all well?’ Then she told them of the wicked deed of Sextus, and she said, ‘If ye be men, avenge it.’ And they all swore to her, that they would avenge it. Then she said again, ‘I am not guilty; yet must I too share in the punishment of this deed, lest any should think that they may be false to their husbands and live.’ And she drew a knife from her bosom, and stabbed herself to the heart.

“At that sight her husband and her father cried aloud; but Lucius drew the knife from the wound, and held it up, and said, ‘By this blood I swear that I will visit this deed upon King Tarquinius, and all his accursed race; neither shall any man hereafter be king in Rome, lest he do the like wickedness.’ And he gave the knife to her husband, and to her father, and to Publius Valerius. They marvelled to hear such words from him whom men called dull; but they swore also, and they took up the body of Lucretia, and carried it down into the forum; and they said, ‘Behold the deeds of the wicked family of Tarquinius.’ All the people of Collatia were moved, and the men took up arms, and they set a guard at the gates, that none might go out to carry the tidings to Tarquinius, and they followed Lucius to Rome. There, too, all the people came together, and the crier summoned them to assemble before the tribune of the Celeres, for Lucius held that office. And Lucius spoke to them of all the tyranny of Tarquinius and his sons, and of the wicked deed of Sextus. And the people in their curiæ took back from Tarquinius the sovereign power, which they had given him, and they banished him and all his family. Then the younger men followed Lucius to Ardea, to win over the army there to join them; and the city was left in the charge of Spurius Lucretius. But the wicked Tullia fled in haste from her house, and all, both men and women, cursed her as she passed, and prayed that the furies of her father’s blood might visit her with vengeance.

“Meanwhile King Tarquinius set out with speed to Rome to put down the tumult. But Lucius turned aside from the road that he might not meet him, and came to the camp; and the soldiers joyfully received him, and they drove out the sons of Tarquinius. King Tarquinius came to Rome, but the gates were shut, and they declared to him from the walls the sentence of banishment which had been passed against him and his family. So he yielded to his fortune, and went to live at Cære with his sons Titus and Aruns. His other son, Sextus, went to Gabii, and the people there, remembering how he had betrayed them to his father, slew him. Then the army left the camp before Ardea, and went back to Rome. And all men said, ‘Let us follow the good laws of the good King Servius; and let us meet in our centuries, according as he directed, and let us choose two men year by year to govern us, instead of a king.’ Then the people met in their centuries in the field of Mars, and they chose two men to rule over them, Lucius Junius, whom men called Brutus, and Lucius Tarquinius of Collatia.”

Every classical reader must perceive the object which our author had in view. He has in great part translated Livy, and he wishes to preserve the legend which the Roman historian has rendered immortal; but he is desirous, at the same time, of doing it, as he himself tells us, in such a

manner that it shall be impossible for any reader, even the most illiterate, to imagine that he is recording a real event. It may be prejudice, and the force of early association, but we can hardly reconcile ourselves to this Mosaic mode of writing the history of the most remote events. Every author's style, to be agreeable, should be natural. The reader experiences a disagreeable feeling in coming upon such quaint and perhaps affected passages, after being habituated to the flowing and vigorous style of the author. It would be better, we conceive, to write the whole in one uniform manner, and mark the difference between the legendary and authentic parts by a difference in the type, or some other equally obvious distinction. But this is a trivial matter, affecting only the commencement of the work ; and ample subject of meditation is suggested by many facts and passages in its later pages.

We have previously noticed the decisive evidence which the Cloaca Maxima and the treaty with Carthage in the time of Tarquin afford, of the early greatness of the Roman monarchy. But we were not aware till reading Arnold—even Niebuhr has not so distinctly brought out the fact—that at the time of the expulsion of the Tarquins and the commencement of the Republic, Rome was already a powerful monarchy, whose sway extended from the northern extremity of the Campagna to the rocks of Terracina ; and that it was then more powerful than it ever was for the first hundred and fifty years of the Commonwealth ! The Roman kingdom is compared by Arnold, under the last of the kings, to Judea under Solomon ; and the fact of a treaty, recorded in Polybius, being in that year concluded with Carthage, proves that the state had already acquired consideration with distant states.

“Setting aside,” says our author, “the tyranny ascribed to Tarquinius, and remembering that it was his policy to deprive the commons of their lately acquired citizenship, and to treat them like subjects rather than members of the state, the picture given of the wealth and greatness of Judea under Solomon may convey some idea of the state of Rome under its latter kings. Powerful amongst surrounding nations, exposed to no hostile invasions, with a flourishing agriculture and an active commerce, the country was great and prosperous ; and the king was enabled to execute public works of the highest magnificence, and to invest himself with a splendour unknown in the earlier times of the monarchy.”

But mark the effect upon the external power and internal

liberties of the nation, consequent on the violent change in the government and establishment of the Commonwealth, as portrayed in the authentic pages of this Liberal historian.

“In the first year of the commonwealth, the Romans still possessed the dominion enjoyed by their kings; all the cities of the coast of Latium, as we have already seen, were subject to them as far as Terracina. *Within twelve years, we cannot certainly say how much sooner, these were all become independent.* This is easily intelligible, if we only take into account the loss to Rome of an able and absolute king, the natural weakness of an unsettled government, and the distractions produced by the king's attempts to recover his throne. The Latins may have held, as we are told of the Sabines in this very time, that their dependent alliance with Rome had been concluded with King Tarquinius, and that, as he was king no longer, and as his sons had been driven out with him, all covenants between Latium and Rome were become null and void. But it is possible also, if the chronology of the common story of these times can be at all depended on, that the Latin cities owed their independence to the Etruscan conquest of Rome. For that war, which has been given in its poetical version as the war with Porsenna, was really a great outbreak of the Etruscan power upon the nations southward of Etruria, in the very front of whom lay the Romans. In the very next year after the expulsion of the king, according to the common story, and certainly at some time within the period with which we are now concerned, the Etruscans fell upon Rome. The result of the war is, indeed, as strangely disguised in the poetical story as Charlemagne's invasion of Spain is in the romances. Rome was completely conquered; all the territory which the kings had won on the right bank of the Tiber was now lost. Rome itself was surrendered to the Etruscan conqueror; his sovereignty was fully acknowledged, the Romans gave up their arms, and recovered their city and territory on condition of renouncing the use of iron except for implements of agriculture. But this bondage did not last long; the Etruscan power was broken by a great defeat sustained before Aricia; for after the fall of Rome the conquerors attacked Latium, and, while besieging Aricia, the united force of the Latin cities, aided by the Greeks of Cumæ, succeeded in destroying their army, and in confining their power to their own side of the Tiber. Still, however, the Romans did not recover their territory on the right bank of that river, and the number of their tribes, as has been already noticed, was consequently lessened by one third, being reduced from thirty to twenty.

“Thus within a short time after the banishment of the last king, the Romans lost all their territory on the Etruscan side of the Tiber, and all their dominion over Latium. A third people were their immediate neighbours on the north-east, the Sabines. The cities of the Sabines reached, says Varro, from Reate, to the distance of half a day's journey from Rome; that is, according to the varying estimate of a day's journey, either seventy-five or a hundred stadia, about ten or twelve miles.

“It is certain, also, that the first enlargement of the Roman territory, after its great diminution in the Etruscan war, took place towards the north-east, between the Tiber and the Anio; and here were the lands of the only new tribes that were added to the Roman nation, for the space of more than one hundred and twenty years after the establishment of the commonwealth.”

Such were the disastrous effects of the revolution which expelled Tarquinius Superbus, even though originating, if we may believe the story of Lucretia in a heinous crime on the

part of his family, on the external power and territorial possessions of Rome. Let us next inquire whether the social condition of the people was improved by the change, and the plebeians reaped those fruits from the violent change of the government which they were doubtless led to expect.

“The most important part,” says Arnold, “in the history of the first years of the commonwealth is the tracing, if possible, the gradual depression of the commons to that extreme point of misery which led to the institution of the tribuneship. We have seen that immediately after the expulsion of the king, the commons shared in the advantages of the revolution; but within a few years we find them so oppressed and powerless, that their utmost hopes aspired, not to the assertion of political equality with the burghers, but merely to the obtaining protection from personal injuries.

“The specific character of their degradation is stated to have been this; that there prevailed among them severe distress, amounting in many cases to actual ruin; that to relieve themselves from their poverty, they were in the habit of borrowing money of the burghers; that the distress continuing, they became generally insolvent; and that, as the law of debtor and creditor was exceedingly severe, they became liable in their persons to the cruelty of the burghers, were treated by them as slaves, confined as such in their workhouses, kept to taskwork, and often beaten at the discretion of their taskmasters.”

Various were the miseries to which the commons were reduced in consequence of the revolution, and inexorable the rigour with which the nobles pressed the advantage they had gained by the abolition of the kingly form of government. The civil convulsions and general distress, Dr Arnold tells us, terminated in the establishment of an exclusive oppressive aristocracy, interrupted occasionally by the legalised despotism of a single individual.

“Thus the monarchy was exchanged for an *exclusive aristocracy*, in which the burghers or patricians possessed the whole dominion of the state. For mixed as was the influence in the assembly of the centuries, and although the burghers through their clients exercised no small control over it, still they did not think it safe to intrust it with much power. In the election of consuls, the centuries could only choose out of a number of patrician or burgher candidates; and even after this election, it remained for the burghers in their great council in the curiæ to ratify it or to annul it, by conferring upon, or refusing to the person so elected, the ‘Imperium;’ in other words, that sovereign power which belonged to the consuls as the successors of the kings, and which, except so far as it was limited within the walls of the city, and a circle of one mile without them, by the right of appeal, was absolute over life and death. As for any legislative power in this period of the commonwealth, the consuls were their own law. No doubt the burghers had their customs, which in all great points the consuls would duly observe, because, otherwise, on the expiration of their office they would be liable to arraignment before the curiæ, and to such punishment as that sovereign assembly might please to inflict; but the commons had no such security, and the uncertainty of the consul’s judgments was the particular grievance which afterwards led to the formation of the code of the Twelve Tables.

“ We are told, however, that within ten years of the first institution of the consuls, *the burghers found it necessary to create a single magistrate with powers still more absolute*, who was to exercise the full sovereignty of a king, and *even without that single check to which the kings of Rome had been subjected*. The Master of the people, that is, of the burghers, or, as he was otherwise called, the Dictator, was appointed, it is true, for six months only, and therefore liable, like the consuls, to be arraigned, after the expiration of his office, for any acts of tyranny which he might have committed during its continuance. But whilst he retained his office he was as absolute without the walls of the city as the consuls were within them ; neither commoners nor burghers had any right of appeal from his sentence, although the latter had enjoyed this protection in the times of the monarchy.”

At length the misery of the people, flowing from the revolution, became so excessive, that they could endure it no longer, and they took the resolution to separate altogether from their oppressors, and retire to the Sacred Hill to found a new Commonwealth.

“ Fifteen years after the expulsion of Tarquinius, the commons, driven to despair by their distress, and exposed without protection to the capricious cruelty of the burghers, resolved to endure their degraded state no longer. The particulars of this second revolution are as uncertain as those of the overthrow of the monarchy ; but thus much is certain, and is remarkable, that the commons sought safety, not victory ; they desired to escape from Rome, not to govern it. It may be true that the commons who were left in Rome gathered together on the Aventine, the quarter appropriated to their order, and occupied the hill as a fortress ; but it is universally agreed that the most efficient part of their body, who were at that time in the field as soldiers, deserted their generals, and marched off to a hill beyond the Anio ; that is, to a spot beyond the limits of the Ager Romanus, the proper territory of the burghers, but within the district which had been assigned to one of the newly created tribes of the commons, the Crustumian. Here they established themselves, and here they proposed to found a new city of their own, to which they would have gathered their families, and the rest of their order who were left behind in Rome, and have given up their old city to its original possessors, the burghers and their clients. But the burghers were as unwilling to lose the services of the commons as the Egyptians in the like case to let the Israelites go, and they endeavoured by every means to persuade them to return. To show how little the commons thought of gaining political power, we have only to notice their demands. They required a general cancelling of the obligations of insolvent debtors, and the release of all those whose persons, in default of payment, had been assigned over to the power of their creditors ; and, further, they insisted on having two of their own body acknowledged by the burghers as their protectors ; and to make this protection effectual, the persons of those who afforded it were to be as inviolable as those of the heralds, the sacred messengers of the gods ; whosoever harmed them was to be held accursed, and might be slain by any one with impunity. To these terms the burghers agreed ; a solemn treaty was concluded between them and the commons, as between two distinct nations ; and the burghers swore for themselves, and for their posterity, that they would hold inviolable the persons of two officers, to be chosen by the centuries on the field of Mars, whose business it should be to extend full protection to any commoner against a sentence of the consul ; that is to say, who might rescue any debtor from the power of his creditor, if they conceived it to be capriciously or cruelly exerted. The two officers thus chosen

retained the name which the chief officers of the commons had borne before,— they were called Tribuni, or tribe masters; but instead of being merely the officers of one particular tribe, and exercising an authority only over the members of their own order, they were named tribunes of the commons at large, and their power, as protectors, in stopping any exercise of oppression towards their own body, extended over the burghers, and was by them solemnly acknowledged. The number of the tribunes was probably suggested by that of the consuls; there were to be two chief officers of the commons as there were of the burghers.”

Thus, all that the Roman populace gained by the revolution which overturned the kingly power, was such a diminution of territory and external importance as it required them more than 150 years to recover, and such an oppressive form of aristocratic government as compelled them to take refuge under a dictator, and led to such a degree of misery as, eighteen years after the convulsion, made them ready to quit their country and homes, and become exiles from their native land!

At the close of the third century of Rome, and fifty years after the expulsion of the Tarquins, Arnold gives the following picture of the external condition of the Republic:—

“ At the close of the third century of Rome, the warfare which the Romans had to maintain against the Opican nations was generally defensive; the Æquians and Volscians had advanced from the line of the Apennines and established themselves on the Alban hills, in the heart of Latium; of the thirty Latin states which had formed the league with Rome in the year 261, thirteen were now either destroyed, or were in the possession of the Opicans; on the Alban hills themselves Tusculum alone remained independent; and there was no other friendly city to obstruct the irruptions of the enemy into the territory of Rome. Accordingly, that territory was plundered year after year; and whatever defeats the plunderers may at times have sustained, yet they were never deterred from renewing a contest which they found in the main profitable and glorious. *So greatly had the power and dominion of Rome fallen since the overthrow of the monarchy.*”

It was by slow degrees, and in a long series of contests, continued without intermission for two hundred years, that the commons recovered the liberties they had lost from the consequences of their triumph in this first convulsion; so true it is, in all ages, that the people are not only never permanent gainers, but in the end the greatest losers, by the revolution in which they had been most completely victorious.

The next great social convulsion of Rome was that consequent on the overthrow of the Decemvirs. The success of that revolution operated in the end grievously to the preju-

dice of the commons, and retarded, by half a century, the advance of real freedom. Every one knows that the Decemvirs were elected to remodel the laws of the Commonwealth ; that they shamefully abused their trust, and constituted themselves tyrants without control ; and that they were at last overthrown by the general and uncontrollable indignation excited by the injustice of Appius to the daughter of Virginius. A juster cause for resistance, a fairer ground for the overthrow of existing authority, could not be imagined ; it was accordingly successful, and the immediate effect of the popular triumph was a very great accession of political power to the commons. Arnold tells us—

“The revolution did not stop here. Other and deeper changes were effected ; but they lasted so short a time, that their memory has almost vanished out of the records of history. The assembly of the tribes had been put on a level with that of the centuries, and the same principle was followed out in the equal division of all the magistracies of the state between the patricians and the commons. Two supreme magistrates, invested with the highest judicial power, and discharging also those important duties which were afterwards performed by the censors, were to be chosen every year, one from the patricians, and the other from the commons. Ten tribunes of the soldiers, or decemviri, chosen five from the patricians and five from the commons, were to command the armies in war, and to watch over the rights of the patricians ; while ten tribunes of the commons, also chosen in equal proportions from both orders, were to watch over the liberties of the commons. And as patricians were thus admitted to the old tribuneship, so the assemblies of the tribes were henceforth, like those of the centuries, to be held under the sanctions of augury, and nothing could be determined in them if the auspices were unfavourable. Thus the two orders were to be made fully equal to one another ; but at the same time they were to be kept perpetually distinct ; for at this very moment the whole twelve tables of the laws of the decemvirs received the solemn sanction of the people, although, as we have seen, there was a law in one of the last tables which declared the marriage of a patrician with a plebeian to be unlawful.

“There being thus an end of all exclusive magistracies, whether patrician or plebeian ; and all magistrates being now recognised as acting in the name of the whole people, the persons of all were to be regarded as equally sacred. Thus the consul Horatius proposed and carried a law which declared that whoever harmed any tribune of the commons, any ædile, any judge or any decemvir, should be outlawed and accursed ; that any man might slay him, and that all his property should be confiscated to the temple of Ceres. Another law was passed by M. Duilius, one of the tribunes, carrying the penalties of the Valerian law to a greater height against any magistrate who should either neglect to have new magistrates appointed at the end of the year, or who should create them without giving the right of appeal from their sentence. Whosoever violated either of these provisions was to be burned alive as a public enemy.

“Finally, in order to prevent the decrees of the senate from being tampered with by the patricians, Horatius and Valerius began the practice of having them carried to the temple of Ceres on the Aventine, and there laid up under the care of the ædiles of the commons.

“This complete revolution was conducted chiefly, as far as appears, by

the two consuls, and by M. Duilius. Of the latter we should wish to have some further knowledge ; it is an unsatisfactory history in which we can only judge of the man from his public measures, instead of being enabled to form some estimate of the merit of his measures from our acquaintance with the character of the man. But there is no doubt that the new constitution attempted to obtain objects for which the time was not yet come, which were regarded rather as the triumph of a party, than as called for by the wants and feelings of the nation ; and therefore the Roman constitution of 306 was as short-lived as Simon de Montford's provisions of Oxford, or as some of the strongest measures of the Long Parliament. An advantage pursued too far in politics, as well as in war, is apt to end in a repulse."

After a continued struggle of seven years, however, this democratic constitution yielded to the reaction in favour of the old institutions of the state, and the experienced evils of the new,—and another constitution was the result of the struggle, which restored matters to the same situation in which they had been before the overthrow of the Decemvirs ; with the addition of a most important officer—the Censor, endowed with almost despotic power—to the patrician faction. This decided reaction is thus described, and the inferences deducible from it fairly stated by Dr Arnold :—

"In the following year we meet for the first time with the name of a new patrician magistracy, the censorship ; and Niebuhr saw clearly that the creation of this office was connected with the appointment of tribunes of the soldiers ; and that both belong to what may be called the constitution of the year 312.

"This constitution recognised two points ; a sort of continuation of the principle of the decemvirate, inasmuch as the supreme government was again, to speak in modern language, put in commission, and the kingly powers, formerly united in the consuls or prætors, were now to be divided between the censors and tribunes of the soldiers ; and secondly, the eligibility of the commons to share in some of the powers thus divided. But the partition, even in theory, was far from equal : the two censors, who were to hold their office for five years, were not only chosen from the patricians, but, as Niebuhr thinks, by them, that is, by the assembly of the *curiæ* ; the two *quæstors*, who judged in cases of blood, were also chosen from the patricians, although by the centuries. Thus the civil power of the old prætors was in its most important points still exercised exclusively by the patricians ; and even their military power, which was professedly to be open to both orders, was not transmitted to the tribunes of the soldiers without some diminution of its majesty. The new tribuneship was not an exact image of the kingly sovereignty ; it was not a *curule* office, and therefore no tribune ever enjoyed the honour of a triumph, in which the conquering general, ascending to the Capitol to sacrifice to the guardian gods of Rome, was wont to be arrayed in all the insignia of royalty.

"But even the small share of power, thus granted in theory to the commons, was in practice withheld from them. Whether from the influence of the patricians in the centuries, or by religious pretences urged by the augurs, or by the enormous and arbitrary power of refusing votes, which the officer presiding at the *comitia* was wont to exercise, the college of the tribunes was for many years filled by the patricians alone. And, while the censorship was to be a fixed institution, the tribunes of the soldiers were to be replaced, whenever it might appear needful, by two consuls ; and to the

consulship no plebeian was so much as legally eligible. Thus the victory of the aristocracy may seem to have been complete, and we may wonder how the commons, after having carried so triumphantly the law of Canuleius, should have allowed the political rights asserted for them by his colleagues to have been so partially conceded in theory, and in practice to be so totally withheld.

“The explanation is simple, and it is one of the most valuable lessons of history. The commons obtained those reforms which they desired, and they desired such only as their state was ripe for. They had withdrawn in times past to the Sacred Hill, but it was to escape from intolerable personal oppression; they had recently occupied the Aventine in arms, but it was to get rid of a tyranny which endangered the honour of their wives and daughters, and to recover the protection of their tribunes; they had more lately still retired to the Janiculum, but it was to remove an insulting distinction which embittered the relations of private life, and imposed on their grandchildren, in many instances, the inconveniences, if not the reproach of illegitimacy. These were all objects of universal and personal interest; and these the commons were resolved not to relinquish. But the possible admission of a few distinguished members of their body to the highest offices of state concerned the mass of the commons but little. They had their own tribunes for their personal protection; but curule magistracies, and the government of the commonwealth, seemed to belong to the patricians, or at least might be left in their hands without any great sacrifice. So it is that all things come best in their season; that political power is then most happily exercised by a people, when it has not been given to them prematurely, that is, before, in the natural progress of things, they feel the want of it. Security for person and property enables a nation to grow without interruption; in contending for this a people's sense of law and right is wholesomely exercised; meantime national prosperity increases, and brings with it an increase of intelligence, till, other and more necessary wants being satisfied, men awaken to the highest earthly desire of the ripened mind, the desire of taking an active share in the great work of government. The Roman commons abandoned the highest magistracies to the patricians for a period of many years; but they continued to increase in prosperity and in influence; and what the fathers had wisely yielded, their sons in the fulness of time acquired. So the English House of Commons, in the reign of Edward III., declined to interfere in questions of peace and war, as being too high for them to compass; but they would not allow the crown to take their money without their own consent; and so the nation grew, and the influence of the House of Commons grew along with it, till that House has become the great and predominant power in the British constitution.

“If this view be correct, Trebonius judged far more wisely than M. Duilius; and the abandonment of half the plebeian tribuneship to the patricians, in order to obtain for the plebeians an equal share in the higher magistracies, would have been as really injurious to the commons as it was unwelcome to the pride of the aristocracy. It was resigning a weapon with which they were familiar, for one which they knew not how to wield. The tribuneship was the foster-nurse of Roman liberty, and without its care that liberty never would have grown to maturity. What evils it afterwards wrought, when the public freedom was fully ripened, arose from that great defect of the Roman constitution, its conferring such extravagant powers on all its officers. It proposed to check one tyranny by another; instead of so limiting the prerogatives of every magistrate and order in the state, whether aristocratical or popular, as to exclude tyranny from all.”

Our limits will not admit of any other extracts, how

interesting soever they may be. Those already made will sufficiently indicate the character of the work. It is clear that Dr Arnold, in addition to his well-known classical and critical acquirements, possesses a discriminating judgment, a reflecting philosophic turn of mind, and the power of graphic interesting description. These are valuable qualities to any historian : they are indispensable to the annalist of Rome, and promise to render his work, if continued in the same spirit, the best history of that wonderful state in the English, perhaps in any modern, language. We congratulate him upon the auspicious commencement of his labours; we cordially wish him success, and shall follow him, with no ordinary interest, through the remainder of his vast subject, interesting to the student of ancient events, and the observer of contemporary transactions.

We have already said that we find no fault with Dr Arnold on account of his politics; nay, that we value his work the more because, giving in the main, as it promises to do, a faithful account of the facts of Roman history, it cannot fail to furnish, from a source the least suspicious, a host of facts decisive in favour of Conservative principles. By Conservative principles we do not mean attachment to despotic power, or aversion to genuine freedom: on the contrary, we mean the utmost abhorrence of the former, and the strongest attachment to the latter. We mean an attachment to that form of government, and that balance of power, which alone can render these blessings permanent,—which render property the ruling, and numbers only the controlling power,—which give to weight of possession and intellect the direction of affairs, and intrust to the ardent feelings of the multitude the duty only of preventing their excesses, or exposing their corruption. Without the former, the rule of the people degenerates, in a few years, in every instance recorded in history, into licentious excess and absolute tyranny; without the latter, the ambition or selfishness of the aristocracy perverts to their own private purposes the dominion of the state. Paradoxical as it may appear, it is strictly and literally true, that the general inclination of abstract students, remote from a practical intercourse with mankind, to republican principles, is a decisive proof of the experienced necessity for Conservative

policy that has always been felt in the actual administration of affairs. Recluse or speculative men become attached to liberal ideas, because they see them constantly put forth, in glowing and generous language, by the popular orators and writers in every age: they associate oppression with the government of a single ruler, or a comparatively small number of persons of great possessions, because they see, in general, that government is established on one or other of these bases; and, consequently, most of the oppressive acts recorded in history have emanated from such authority. They forget that the opportunity of abusing power has been so generally afforded to these classes by the experienced impossibility of intrusting it to any other; that if the theory of popular government had been practicable, democracy, instead of exhibiting only a few blood-stained specks in history, would have occupied the largest space in its annals; that if the people had been really capable of directing affairs, they would, in every age, have been the supreme authority, and the holders of property the declaimers against their abuses; and that no proof can be so decisive against the practicability of any such form of government, as the fact, that it has been found, during six thousand years, of such rare occurrence, as to make even learned persons, till taught by experience, blind to its tendency.

MIRABEAU

[BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, MAY 1832]

“It is a melancholy fact,” says Madame de Stael, “that while the human race is continually advancing by the acquisitions of intellect, it is doomed to move perpetually in the same circle of error, from the influence of the passions.” If this observation was just, even when this great author wrote, how much more is it now applicable, when a new generation has arisen, blind to the lessons of experience, and we, in this free and prosperous land, have yielded to the same passions, and been seduced by the same delusions, which, three-and-forty years ago, actuated the French people, and have been deemed inexcusable by all subsequent historians, even in its enslaved population !

It would appear inconceivable, that the same errors should thus be repeated by successive nations, without the least regard to the lessons of history ; that all the dictates of experience, all the conclusions of wisdom, all the penalties of weakness, should be forgotten, before the generation which has suffered under their neglect is cold in their graves ; that the same vices should be repeated, the same criminal ambition indulged, to the end of the world ; if we did not recollect that it is the very essence of passion, whether in nations or individuals, to be insensible to the sufferings of others, and to pursue its own headstrong inclinations, regardless alike of the admonitions of reason and the experience of the world. It would seem that the vehemence of passion in nations is as little liable to be influenced by con-

Souvenirs sur Mirabeau, et sur les Premières Assemblées Législatives. Par ETIENNE DUMONT, de Genève. 8vo. London : E. Bull. 1832.—We have translated the quotations ourselves, not having seen the English version.

siderations of prudence, or the slightest regard to the consequences, as the career of intemperance in individuals ; and that in like manner, as every successive age beholds multitudes who, in the pursuit of desire, rush headlong down the gulf of perdition, so every successive generation is doomed to witness the sacrifice of national prosperity, or the extinction of national existence, in the insane pursuit of democratic ambition. Providence has appointed certain trials for nations as well as individuals ; and for those who, disregarding the admonitions of virtue, and slighting the dictates of duty, yield to the tempter, certain destruction is appointed in the inevitable consequences of their criminal desires, not less in the government of empires than in the paths of private life.

Forty years ago, the passion for innovation seized a great and powerful nation in Europe, illustrious in the paths of honour, grown gray with years of renown. The voice of religion was discarded, the lessons of experience were rejected : visionary projects were entertained, chimerical anticipations indulged : the ancient institutions of the country were not amended, but destroyed : a new constitution was introduced, amidst the unanimous applause of the people. The monarch placed himself at the head of the movement, the nobles joined the commons, the clergy united in the work of reform : all classes, by common consent, conspired in the demolition and reconstruction of the constitution. A new era was thought to have dawned on human affairs ; the age of gold to be about to return through the regeneration of mankind.

The consequence, as all the world knows, was ruin, devastation, and misery, unparalleled in modern times : the king, the queen, were beheaded ; the nobles were exiled or guillotined, the clergy confiscated and banished, the fundholders starved and ruined, the merchants exterminated, the landholders beggared, the people decimated. The wrath of Heaven needed no destroying angel to be the minister of its vengeance : the guilty passions of men worked out their own and well-deserved punishment. The fierce passion of democracy was extinguished in blood : the Reign of Terror froze every heart with horror : the tyranny of the Directory destroyed the very name of freedom : the ambition of Napoleon visited every cottage with mourning, and doomed to

tears every mother in France ; and the sycophancy of all classes, the natural result of former license, so paved the way for military despotism, that the haughty Emperor could only exclaim with Tiberius—" O homines ad servitutem parati !" *

Forty years after, the same unruly and reckless spirit seized the very nation who had witnessed these horrors, and bravely struggled for twenty years to avert them from their own shores. The passion of democracy became general in all the manufacturing and trading classes : a large portion of the nobility were deluded by the idea that, by yielding to the torrent, they could regulate its course : the ministers of the Crown put themselves at the head of the movement, and wielded the royal prerogative to give force and consistence to the ambition of the multitude : political fanaticism again reared its hydra head : the ministers of religion became the objects of odium ; everything sacred, everything venerable, the subject of opprobrium. By yielding to this tempest of passion and terror, enlightened men seriously anticipated, not a repetition of the horrors of the French Revolution, but the staying of the fury of democracy, the stilling of the waves of faction, the calming the ambition of the people.

That a delusion so extraordinary, a blindness so infatuated, should have existed so soon after the great and bloody drama had been acted on the theatre of Europe, will appear altogether incredible to future ages. It is certain, however, that it exists, not only among the unthinking millions, who, being incapable of judging of the consequences of political changes, are of no weight in a philosophical view of the subject, but among thinking thousands who are capable of forming a correct judgment, and whose opinions on other subjects are highly worthy of consideration. This is the circumstance which furnishes the real phenomenon, and into the causes of which future ages will anxiously inquire. It is no more surprising that a new generation of shopkeepers, manufacturers, and artisans should be devoured by the passion for political power, without any regard to its recent consequences in the neighbouring kingdom, than that youth, in every successive generation, should yield to the seductions of pleasure, or the allurements of vice, without ever

* " O men, ripe for slavery ! "

thinking of the miseries it has brought upon their fathers, and the old time before them. But how men of sense, talent, and information—men who really have a stake in the country, and would themselves be the first victims of revolution, should be carried away by the same infatuation, cannot be so easily explained ; and if it cannot be accounted for from some accidental circumstances, it offers the most gloomy prospects for the cause of truth, and the future destinies of mankind.

“ The direction of literature and philosophy in France, during the last half of the eighteenth century,” says Madame de Stael, “ was extremely bad ; but, if I may be allowed the expression, the direction of ignorance has been still worse ; for no one book can do much mischief to those who read all. If the idlers in the world, on the other hand, occupy themselves by reading a few moments, the work which they read makes as great an impression on them as the arrival of a stranger in the desert ; and if that work abounds in sophisms, they have no opposite arguments to oppose to it. The discovery of printing is *truly fatal to those who read only by halves or chance* ; for knowledge, like the Lance of Argail, inflicts wounds which nothing but itself can heal.”* In this observation is to be found the true solution of the extraordinary political delusions which now overspread the world ; and it is much easier to discern the causes of the calamity, than to perceive what remedy can be devised for it.

If you could give to all who can read the newspapers either intellect to understand, or taste to relish, or money to buy, or time to read, works of historical information or philosophical wisdom, there might be a reasonable hope that error in the end would be banished from thought, and that political knowledge, like the Thames water in the course of a long voyage, would work itself pure. But as it is obvious to every one practically acquainted with the condition of mankind, that ninety-nine out of the hundred who peruse the daily press are either totally incapable of forming a sound opinion on any subject of thought, or so influenced by prejudice as to be inaccessible to the force of reason, or so much swayed by passion, or actuated by interest, as to be deaf to argument, and beyond the reach of a sense of

* *De l'Allemagne*, iii. 247.

justice, or so destitute of information as to be insensible to its force, it is hardly possible to discern any mode in which, with a daily press extensively read, and political excitement kept up, either truth is to become generally known, or error sufficiently combated. Every one, how slender soever his intellect, how slight his information, how limited his time for study, can understand and feel gratified by abuse of his superiors. The common slang declamation against the aristocrats, the clergy, and the throne, in France, and against the boroughmongers, the bishops, and the peers, in England, is on the level of the meanest capacity ; and is calculated to seduce all those who are "either," in Bacon's words, "weak in judgment, or infirm in resolution ; that is, the greater proportion of mankind."

It is this circumstance of the universal diffusion of passion, and the extremely limited extent of such intellect or information as qualifies to judge on political subjects, which renders the future prospects of any nation which has got itself involved in the whirlwind of innovation so extremely melancholy. Every change which is proposed holds out some *immediate* or apparent benefit, which forms the attraction and inducement to the multitude. Every one can see and understand this immediate or imaginary benefit, and therefore the change is clamorously demanded by the people. To discern the *ultimate* effects again, to see how these changes are to operate on the frame of society, and the misery they are calculated to bring on the very persons who demand them, requires a head of more than ordinary strength, and knowledge of more than ordinary extent. Nature has not given the one, education can never give the other to above one in a hundred. Hence the poison circulates universally, while the antidote is confined to a few ; and therefore, in such periods, the most extravagant measures are forced upon Government, and a total disregard of experience characterises the national councils.

It is to this cause that the extremely short duration of any institutions which have been framed under the pressure of democratic influence is to be ascribed, and the rapidity with which they are terminated by the tranquil despotism of the sword. Rome, in two generations, ran through the horrors of democratic convulsions, until they were stopped by the

sword of the Dictator. France, since the reform transports of 1789 began, has had *thirteen* different constitutions, none of which subsisted two years, except such as were supported by the power of Napoleon and the bayonets of the Allies. England, in five years after the people ran mad in 1642, was quietly sheltered under the despotism of Cromwell; and the convulsions of the republics of South America have been so numerous since their struggles began, that civilised nations have ceased to count them.

Historians recording events at a distance from the period of their occurrence, and ignorant of the experienced evils which led to their adoption, have often indulged in eloquent declamation against the corruption and debasement of those nations, such as Florence, Milan, Sienna, and Denmark, which have by common consent, and a solemn act, surrendered their liberties to a sovereign prince. There is nothing, however, either extraordinary or debasing about it. They gave up their privileges, because they had never known what real freedom was; they invoked the tranquillity of despotism, to avoid the experienced ills of anarchy; they chose the lesser, to avoid the greater evil. Democracy, admirable as a spring, and when duly tempered by the other elements of society, is utterly destructive where it becomes predominant, or is deprived of its regulating weight. The evils it produces are so excessive—the suffering it occasions so dreadful—that society cannot exist under them; and the people take refuge in despair, in the surrender of all they have been contending for, to obtain that peace which they have sought for in vain amidst its stormy convulsions. The horrors of democratic tyranny greatly exceed those either of regal or aristocratic oppression. History contains numerous examples of nations who have lingered on for centuries under the bowstring of the sultan, or the fetters of the feudal nobility; but none in which democratic violence, when once fairly let loose in an old and opulent state, has not speedily brought about its own extirpation.

But although there is little hope that the multitude, when once infected by the deadly contagion of democracy, can right themselves, or be righted by others, by the utmost efforts of reason, argument, or eloquence, nature has in reserve one remedy of sovereign and universal efficacy, which

is as universally understood, and as quick in its operation, as the poison which rendered its application necessary. This is, SUFFERING. Every man cannot, indeed, understand political reasoning; but every man can feel the want of a meal. The multitude may be insensible to the efforts of reason and eloquence, but they cannot remain deaf to the dangers of murder and conflagration, or the still more trying sufferings of want and destitution. These, the natural and unvarying attendants on democratic ascendancy, will as certainly in the end tame the fierce spirits of the people, as winter will succeed summer; but whether they will do so in time to preserve the national freedom or uphold the national fortunes, is a very different and far more doubtful question. It is seldom that the illumination of suffering comes in time to save the people from the despotism of the sword.

It is in this particular that the superior strength and efficiency of free constitutions, such as Britain, in resisting the fatal encroachments of democracy, to any possessed by a despotic government, is to be found. The habits of union, intelligence, and political exertion which they have developed, have given to the higher and more influential classes such a power of combining to resist the danger, that obstacles are thrown in the way of change which retard the fatal rapidity of its course. Discussion goes on in the legislature; talent is enlisted on the side of truth; honour and patriotism are found at the post of danger; virtue receives its noblest tribute in the universal calumnies of wickedness. These generous efforts, indeed, are in general totally unavailing at the time to alter the opinion of the many-headed monster which has started into political activity; but they combine the brave, the enlightened, and the good into a united phalanx, which, if it cannot singly resist the torrent, may at least arrest its fury, till the powers of nature come to its aid. These powers do come at last with desperate and resistless effect, in the universal suffering, the far-spread agony, the hopeless depression of the poor; but the danger is imminent, that before the change takes place the work of destruction has been completed; and the national liberties, deprived of the ark of the constitution, may perish under the futile attempts to reconstruct it.

In revolutions as in fever, the great art of the physician is to make the patient outlive the disease.

There never was a mistake so deplorable as to imagine that it is possible to give to any nation at once a new constitution, or to preserve the slightest guarantee for freedom under institutions created at once by the utmost efforts of human wisdom. It is as impossible at once to give a durable constitution to a nation, as it is to give a healthful frame to an individual without going through the previous changes of childhood and youth. "Governments," says Sir James Mackintosh, "are not framed after a model, but all their parts grow out of occasional acts, prompted by some urgent expedience or some private interest, which in the course of time coalesce and harden into usage; and this bundle of usages is the object of respect, and the guide of conduct, long before it is embodied, defined, or enforced in written laws. Government may be, in some degree, reduced to system, but it cannot flow from it. It is not like a machine, or a building, which may be constructed entirely, and according to a previous plan, by the art and labour of man. It is better illustrated by comparison with vegetables, or even animals, which may be, in a very high degree, improved by skill and care—which may be grievously injured by neglect, or destroyed by violence, but which cannot be produced by human contrivance. A government can, indeed, be no more than a mere draught or scheme of rule, when it is not composed of habits of obedience on the part of the people, and of a habitual exercise of certain portions of authority by the individuals or bodies who constitute the sovereign power. These habits, like all others, can only be formed by repeated acts; they cannot be suddenly infused by the lawgiver, nor can they immediately follow the most perfect conviction of their propriety. Many causes having more power over the human mind than written law, it is extremely difficult, from the mere perusal of a written scheme of government, to foretell what it will prove in action. There may be governments so bad that it is justifiable to destroy them, and to trust to the probability that a better government will grow in their stead. But as the rise of a worse is also possible, *so terrible a peril is never to be incurred, except in the case of a tyranny which it is*

impossible to reform. It may be necessary to burn a forest containing much useful timber, but giving shelter to beasts of prey, who are formidable to an infant colony in its neighbourhood, and of too vast an extent to be gradually and safely thinned by their inadequate labour. It is fit, however, that they should be apprised, before they take an irreparable step, how little it is possible to foresee whether the earth, stripped of its vegetation, shall become an unprofitable desert or a pestilential marsh.”*

The great cause, therefore, of the devastating march of revolutions, and the total subversion which they in general effect in the liberties of the people, is the fundamental changes in laws and institutions which they effect. As long as these remain untouched, or not altered in any considerable degree, any passing despotism, how grievous soever, is only of temporary effect; and when the tyranny is overpast, the public freedom again runs into its wonted and consuetudinary channels. Thus the successive tyrannies of Richard the Third, Henry the Eighth, and James the Second, produced no fatal effects on English freedom, because they subsisted only during the lifetime of an arbitrary or capricious sovereign; and, upon his death, or removal from power, the ancient privileges of the people revived, and the liberties of the nation were again as extensive as ever.

The Great Rebellion hardly partook at all, at least in its early stages, of the character of a democratic movement. Its leaders were the House of Commons, who possessed four-fifths of the landed property of the kingdom, and were proprietors of three times as much territory as the Upper House; hence no considerable changes in laws, institutions, or customs, took place. “The courts of law,” says Lingard, “still administered law on the old precedents, and, with the exception of a change of the dynasty on the throne, the people perceived little change in the administration of government.”† Power was not, during the course of the Great Rebellion, transferred into other and inferior hands, from whence it never can be wrenched but at the sword’s point; it remained in the House of Commons, the legal representatives of the kingdom, till it was taken from them

* *Mackintosh’s History of England*, i. 73.

† *Lingard*, xi. 11, 12.

by the hand of Cromwell. The true democratic spirit appeared at the close of the struggles among the Fifth Monarchy men, but their numbers were too inconsiderable to acquire any preponderance before the usurpation of Cromwell, that daring soldier. Accordingly, on the Restoration, the first thing that Government did, was to issue writs for all persons to unite in returning members to Parliament who were qualified prior to 1640; and after an abeyance of twenty years, the constitution returned to its ancient forms. The Revolution of 1688, as it is called, was not strictly speaking a revolution; it was merely a change of dynasty, accomplished by a unanimous effort of the public will, and unattended by the least change in the aristocratic influence, or the balance of powers in the state.

“The wisdom of our ancestors” is a foolish phrase, which does not convey the meaning which it is intended to express. When it is said that institutions formed by the wisdom of former ages should not be changed, it is not meant that our ancestors were gifted with any extraordinary sagacity, but that the customs which they adopted were the result of experienced utility and known necessity; and that the collection of usages, called the Constitution, is more perfect than any human wisdom could at once have framed, because it has arisen out of social wants, and been adapted to the exigencies of actual practice, during a long course of ages. To demolish and reconstruct such a constitution, to remove power from the hands in which it was formerly vested, and throw it into channels where it never was accustomed to flow, is an evil incomparably greater, an experiment infinitely more hazardous, than the total subversion of the liberties of the people by an ambitious monarch or a military usurper, because it not only destroys the balance of power at the moment, but renders it impossible for the nation to right itself at the close of the tyranny, and raises up a host of separate revolutionary interests, invested at the moment with supreme authority, and dependent for their existence upon the continuance of the revolutionary regime. It is to Government what a total change of landed property is to the body politic; a wound which, as Ireland sufficiently proves, a nation can never recover.

As the Reform Bill proposes to throw the whole political power in the State into new and inexperienced hands, the change thereby contemplated is incomparably greater and more perilous than the most complete prostration of the liberties, either of the people or the aristocracy, by a passing tyranny. It is the creation of new and formidable revolutionary interests which will never expire,—the vesting of power in hands jealous of its possession, in proportion to the novelty of its acquisition, and their own unfitness to wield it,—which form the insuperable evil. Such a calamity is inflicted as effectually by the tranquil and pacific formation of a new constitution, as by the most terrible civil wars, or the severest military oppression. The liberties of England survived the wars of the Roses, and the tyranny of Henry VIII.; but those of France were at once destroyed by the insane innovations of the Constituent Assembly. And this destruction took place without any opposition, under the auspices of a reforming king, a conceding nobility, and an intoxicated people, by the mere votes of the States-General.

The example of France is so extremely and exactly applicable to our changes—the pacific and applauded march of its innovations was so precisely similar to that which has so long been pressed upon the Legislature in this country, that it is not surprising that it should be an extremely sore subject with the Reformers, and that they should endeavour, by every method of ingenuity, misrepresentation, and concealment, to withdraw the public attention from so damning a precedent. It is fortunate, therefore, for the cause of truth, that at this juncture a work has appeared, flowing from the least suspicious quarter, which at once puts this matter on the right footing, and demonstrates that it was not undue delay, but over-rapidity of concession, which brought about its unexampled horrors.

M. Dumont, the title of whose *Souvenirs sur Mirabeau* is prefixed to this article, was the early and faithful friend of that extraordinary man. He wrote a great proportion of his speeches, and composed almost entirely the *Courrier de Provence*, a journal published in the name of Mirabeau, and to which a great part of his political celebrity was owing. The celebrated declaration on the Rights of Man,

published by the Constituent Assembly, was in great part composed by him. He was the intimate friend of Brissot, Garat, Roland, Vergniaud, Talleyrand, and all the leaders of the popular party; and his opinion was deemed of so much importance, that he was frequently consulted by the Ministers as to the choice of persons to fill the highest situations. In this country he was the intimate and valued friend of Sir Samuel Romilly, Mr Whitbread, Lord Lansdowne, Lord Holland, and all the party at Holland House. Latterly, he was chiefly occupied in arranging, composing, and putting into order the multifarious effusions of Mr Bentham's genius; and from his pen almost all the published productions of that great and original man have flowed. Half the fame of Mirabeau, and more than half that of Bentham, rest on his labours. He was no common person who was selected to be the coadjutor of two such men, and rendered the vehicle of communicating their varied and original thoughts to the world.

Before quoting the highly interesting observations of this able and impartial observer on the French Constituent Assembly, and comparing them with the progress of Reform in this country, we shall recall to our reader's recollection the dates of the leading measures of that celebrated body, as, without having them in view, the importance of M. Dumont's observations cannot be duly appreciated. Such a survey will at the same time bring to the test the accuracy of Mr Macaulay's and Sir John Hobhouse's assertion, that it was not the concession, but the resistance, of the privileged orders, which precipitated the fatal cataract of their revolution. The abstract is abridged from Mignet, the ablest historian on the republican side of which France can boast, and Lacroix, the well-known annalist of its events.

In Aug. 1788, Louis, in obedience to the wishes of the nation, agreed to assemble the States-General, which had not met in France since 1614.

In Sept. 1789, the King, by the advice of Necker, by a Royal ordinance, doubled the number of the representatives of the Tiers Etat; in other words, he doubled the House of Commons of France,* while those of the clergy and nobles were left at their former amount.

* *Mignet*, i. 25.

The elections in April 1789 were conducted with the utmost favour to the popular party. No scrutiny of those entitled to vote took place ; after the few first days, every person decently dressed was allowed to vote, without any questions being asked.*

When the States-General met on May 6, 1789, the King and his minister Necker were received with cold and dignified courtesy by the nobles and clergy, but with rapturous applause by the Tiers Etat, who saw in them the authors of the prodigious addition which the number and consequence of their order had received.†

May 9. No sooner had the States-General proceeded to business, than the Tiers Etat demanded that the nobles and clergy should *sit and vote with them in one chamber* ; a proceeding unexampled in French history, and which it was foreseen would give them the complete ascendancy, by reason of their numerical superiority to those of both the other orders united.‡

May 10 to June 9. The nobles and clergy resisted for a short while this prodigious innovation, and insisted that, after the manner of all the States-General which had assembled in France from the foundation of the monarchy, the orders should sit and vote by separate chambers ; and that this was more especially indispensable since the recent duplication of the Tiers Etat had given that body a numerical superiority over the two other orders taken together.§

June 17. The Tiers Etat declared themselves the National Assembly of France, a designation, says Dumont, which indicated their intention to usurp the whole sovereignty of the State.

June 21. The King, terrified at the thoughts of a collision with the Commons, and thinking to put himself at the head of the movement, first persuaded, and at length, through the medium of Marshal Luxembourg, *commanded* the nobles to yield to this demand of the Tiers Etat.||

The nobles and clergy gradually yielded. On the 19th June 1789, 147 of the clergy joined the Tiers Etat ; and on the 25th the Duke of Orleans, with forty-seven of the nobles, also deserted their order, and adhered to the opposite

* *Dumont.*
§ *Ibid.* i. 37.

† *Mignet*, i. 30.
|| *Lacretelle's Pr. Hist.* p. 3.

‡ *Mignet*, i. 37.

party. The remainder, finding their numbers so seriously weakened, and urged on by their Reforming Sovereign, also joined the Tiers Etat, and sat with them in one assembly on 27th June.* “On that day (says Dumont) the Revolution was completed.”

On the 23d June 1789, the King held a solemn meeting of the whole estates in one assembly, and while he declared the former proceedings of the Tiers Etat unconstitutional, granted such immense concessions to the people as never, said Mirabeau, were before granted by a king to his subjects. All the objects of the Revolution, says Mignet, were gained by that royal ordinance.†

July 13. The King ordered the troops, who had been assembled in the vicinity of the capital, to be withdrawn, and sanctioned the establishment of National Guards.‡

July 14. The Bastille taken, and all Paris in an insurrection.

July 16. The King appointed Lafayette commander of the National Guard, and Bailly, the president of the Assembly, mayor of Paris.

July 17. The King visited Paris in the midst of a mob of 200,000 revolutionary democrats.

Aug. 4. The whole feudal rights, including tithes, abandoned in one night by the nobility, on the motion of the Duke de Noailles.

Aug. 13. Decree of the Assembly declaring all ecclesiastical estates national property.

Aug. 20. The Declaration of the Rights of Man issued.

Aug. 23. Freedom of religious opinions proclaimed.

Aug. 24. The unlimited freedom of the press established.

Aug. 25. Dreadful disturbances in Paris on account of famine.

Sept. 13. A new decree on account of the extreme suffering in Paris.

Oct. 5. Versailles invaded by a clamorous mob. The King and Queen nearly murdered, and brought captives by a furious mob to Paris.

Nov. 2. Decree passed, on the motion of the Bishop of Autun, for the confiscation and disposal of all ecclesiastical property.

* *Lacretelle's Pr. Hist.* i. 42.

† *Ibid.* i. 43.

‡ *Ibid.* i. 3.

Feb. 24, 1790. Titles of honour abolished.

Feb. 26. New division of the kingdom into departments ; and all appointments, civil and military, vested in the people.

March 17. Sale of national domains to the value of 400 millions of francs authorised, and assignats, bearing a forced circulation, issued, to supply the immense deficiency of the revenue.*

It is unnecessary to go farther. Here it appears, that within *two months* of the meeting of the States-General, the union of the orders in one chamber—in other words, the annihilation of the House of Peers—was effected, the feudal rights were abolished, and the entire sovereignty was vested in the National Assembly. In *three months* the church property was confiscated, the Rights of Man published, tithes annihilated, and the unlimited freedom of the press proclaimed. In *five months* the King and royal family were brought prisoners to Paris. In *six months* the distress naturally consequent on these convulsions had attracted the constant attention of the Assembly, and spread the utmost misery among the people ; and in *ten months* the total failure of the revenue had rendered the sale of church property, and the issuing of assignats bearing a forced circulation, necessary, which it is well known soon swallowed up property of every description throughout France. We do not know what the revolutionists consider as *tardy* concessions of the nobility and throne ; but when it is recollected that all these proceedings were agreed to by the King, and passed by the legislature, at the dates here specified, it is conceived that a more *rapid* revolutionary progress could hardly be wished for by the most ardent reformer.

The authority of Madame de Stael has been appealed to in the House of Commons, as illustrative of the vain attempts of a portion of the aristocracy to stem the torrent. Let us hear the opinion of the same great writer, as to who it was that *put it in motion*. “No revolution,” she observes, “can succeed in a great country, *unless it is commenced by the aristocratic class*. The people afterwards get possession of it, but they cannot strike the first blow. When I recollect that it was *the parliaments, the nobles, and the*

* See *Lacretelle's Pr. Hist.* p. 1-9, Introduction.

clergy of France, who first strove to limit the royal authority, I am far from insinuating that their design in so doing was culpable. A sincere enthusiasm then animated all ranks of Frenchmen—public spirit had spread universally; and among the higher classes, the most enlightened and generous were those who ardently desired that public opinion should have its due sway in the direction of affairs. But *can the privileged ranks, who commenced the Revolution, accuse those who only carried it on?* Some will say, we wished only that the changes should proceed a certain length; others, that they should go a step farther; *but who can regulate the impulse of a great people when once put in motion?*” * These are the words of sober wisdom; and coming, as they do, from the gifted daughter of M. Necker, who had so large a share, by the duplication of the Tiers Etat, in the raising of the tempest, and who was so devoted a worshipper of her father’s memory, none were ever uttered worthy of more profound meditation.

This is the true principle on the subject. The aid of the Crown, or of a portion of the aristocracy, is indispensable to put the torrent of democracy in motion. After it is fairly set agoing, all their efforts are unavailing to restrain its course. Unless the French nobility had headed the mob in demanding the States-General, matters could never have been brought to a crisis. After they had roused the public feeling, they found, by dear-bought experience, that they were altogether unable to restrain its fury. In this country, the revolutionary party could have done nothing, had they not been supported in their projects of reform by the ministers of the Crown and the Whig nobility. Having been so, we shall see in the long run whether they will be better able than their compeers on the other side of the Channel to master the tempest they have raised.

It has been already stated, that a large portion of the nobility supported the pretensions of the Tiers Etat. Dumont gives the following picture of the reforming nobles, and of the extravagant expectations of the different classes who supported their favourite innovations.

“The house of the Duke de la Rochefoucauld, distinguished by its simplicity, the purity of its manners, and the independence of its principles, assembled all those members of the nobility who supported the people, the double

* *Révolution Française*, i. 125.

representation of the Tiers Etat, the vote *per capita*, the abandonment of all privileges, and the like. Condorcet, Dupont, Lafayette, the Duke de Liancourt, were the chief persons of that society. Their *ruling passion was to create for France a new constitution*. Such of the nobility and princes as wished to preserve *the ancient constitution of the States-General*, formed the aristocratic party against which the public indignation was so general; but although much noise was made about them, their numbers were inconsiderable. The bulk of the nation saw only in the States-General the *means of diminishing the taxes*; the fundholders, so often exposed to the consequences of a violation of public faith, considered them as an *invincible rampart against national bankruptcy*. The deficit had made them tremble. They were on the point of ruin; and they embraced with warmth the hope of giving to the revenues of the state a secure foundation. These ideas were utterly inconsistent with each other. *The nobility had in their bosom a democratic as well as an aristocratic party. The clergy were divided in the same manner, and so were the commons.* No words can convey an idea of the confusion of ideas, the extravagant expectations, the hopes and passions of all parties. You would imagine the world was on *the day after the Creation*."—Pp. 37, 38.

We have seen that the clergy, by their joining the Tiers Etat, first gave them a decided superiority over the other orders, and vested in their hands omnipotent power, by compelling the nobles to sit and vote with them in an assembly where they were numerically inferior to the popular party. The return they met with in a few months was, a decree *confiscating all their property* to the service of the state. With bitter and unavailing anguish did they then look back to their insane conduct in so strongly fanning a flame of which they were so soon to be the victims. Dumont gives the following striking account of the feelings of one of their reforming bishops when the tempest they had raised reached their own doors.

"The Bishop of Chartres was one of the Bishops who were attached to the popular party; that is to say, he was a supporter of the union of the orders, the vote by head, and the new constitution. He was by no means a man of a political turn, nor of any depth of understanding; but he had so much candour and good faith that he distrusted no one; he never imagined that the Tiers Etat could have any other design but to reform the existing abuses, and do the good which appeared so easy a matter to all the world. A stranger to every species of intrigue, sincere in his intentions, he followed no other guide than his conscience, and what he sincerely believed to be for the public good. His religion was like his politics; he was benevolent, tolerant, and sincerely rejoiced to see the Protestants exempted from every species of constraint. He was well aware that the clergy would be called on to make great sacrifices; but never anticipated that he was destined to be the victim of the Revolution. I saw him at the time when the whole goods of the church were declared national property, with tears in his eyes, dismissing his old domestics, reducing his hospitable mansion, selling his most precious effects to discharge his debts. He found some relief by pouring his sorrow into my bosom. His regrets were not for himself, but he incessantly accused himself for having suffered himself to be deceived, and having embraced the party of the Tiers Etat, which violated, when triumphant, all

the engagements which it had made when in a state of weakness. How grievous it must have been to a man of good principles to have contributed to the success of so unjust a party! Yet never man had less reason, morally speaking, to reproach himself."—Pp. 66-67.

The vast importance of *words* in revolutionary convulsions, of which Napoleon was so well aware when he said that "it was by epithets that you govern mankind," appears in the account given by this able and impartial writer on the designation which the Tiers Etat chose for themselves before their union with the other orders.

"The people of Versailles openly insulted in the streets and at the gates of the Assembly those whom they called *Aristocrats*. The power of that word became magical, as is always the case with party epithets. What astonishes me is, that there was no contrary denomination fixed on by the opposite party. They were called *the Nation*. The effects of these two words, when constantly opposed to each other, may readily be conceived.

"Though the Commons had already become sensible of their power, there were many opinions on the way in which it should be exerted, and the name to be given to the Assembly. They had not as yet all the audacity which they have since evinced; but the men who looked into futurity clearly saw that this determination would have been of the most important consequences. To declare themselves the National Assembly, was to count for nothing the king, the noblesse, and the clergy; it was equivalent to a declaration of civil war, if the government had had sufficient vigour to make any resistance. To declare themselves the Assembly of the Commons, was to express what undoubtedly was the fact, but what would not have answered the purpose of compelling the clergy and nobles to join them. Many denominations were proposed which were neither the one nor the other of these; for every one as yet was desirous to conceal his ultimate pretensions; and even Sièyes, who rejected everything which tended to preserve the distinction of orders, did not venture to propose the expression, National Assembly. It was hazarded for the first time by a deputy named Le Grand; there was an immediate call for the vote, and it was carried by a majority of 500 to 80 voices."—Pp. 73-74.

This is the never-failing device of the democratic party in all ages. Trusting to the majority of mere numbers on their side, they invariably represent themselves as the whole nation, and the friends of the constitution as a mere fragment, utterly unworthy of consideration or regard. "Who are the Tiers Etat?" said the Abbé Sièyes. "They are the French nation, *minus* 150,000 privileged individuals."—"Who are the Reformers?" says the *Times*. "They are 24,000,000 of men, *minus* 200 boroughmongers." By such false sweeping assertions as these, are men's eyes blinded not only to what is honourable, but to what is safe and practicable. By this single device of calling the usurping Commons the National Assembly, the friends of order were deterred from entering into a struggle with what was called,

and therefore esteemed, the national will ; and many opportunities of stemming the torrent, which, as Dumont shows, afterwards arose, were irrecoverably neglected.

Of the fatal weakness which attended the famous sitting of the 23d June 1789, when Louis made such prodigious concessions to his subjects, without taking at the same time any steps to make the royal authority respected, the opinion of Dumont is as follows :—

“Necker had intended by these concessions *to put democracy into the royal hands ; but they had the effect of putting the aristocracy under the despotism of the people.* We must not consider that royal sitting in itself alone. Viewed in this light, it contained *the most extensive concessions that ever monarch made to his people.* They would, at any other time, have excited the most lively gratitude. Is a prince powerful ? Everything that he gives is a gift, everything that he does not resume is a favour. Is he weak ? everything that he concedes is considered as a debt ; everything that he refuses, as an act of injustice.

“The Commons had now set their heart upon being the National Assembly. Everything which did not amount to that was nothing in their estimation. But to hold a Bed of Justice, annul the decrees of the Commons, make a great noise without having even foreseen any resistance, or taken a single precaution for the morrow, without having taken any steps to prepare a party in the Assembly, was an act of madness, and from it may be dated the ruin of the monarchy. Nothing can be more dangerous than to drive a weak prince to acts of vigour which he is unable to sustain ; for when he has exhausted the terrors of words he has no other resource : the authority of the throne has been lowered, and the people have discovered the secret of their monarch’s weakness.”—P. 87.

The National Assembly, like every other body which commits itself to the gale of popular applause, experienced the utmost disquietude at the thoughts of punishing any of the excesses of their popular supporters. How exactly is the following description applicable to all times and nations !

“The disorders which were prolonged in the provinces, the massacres which stained the streets of Paris, induced many estimable persons to propose an address of the Assembly, condemnatory of such proceedings, to the people. The Assembly, however, was so apprehensive of offending the multitude, that they regarded as a snare every *motion tending to repress the disorders, or censure the popular excesses.* Secret distrust and disquietude were at the bottom of every heart. They had triumphed by means of the people, and they could not venture to show themselves severe towards them ; on the contrary, though they frequently declared, in the preambles of their decrees, that they were profoundly afflicted at the burning of the chateaus and the insults to the nobility, *they rejoiced in heart at the propagation of a terror which they regarded as indispensable to their designs.* They had reduced themselves to the necessity of fearing the noblesse, or being feared by them. They condemned publicly, they protected secretly ; they conferred compliments on the constituted authorities, and gave encouragement to license. Respect for the executive power was nothing but words ;

and in truth, when the ministers of the crown revealed the secret of their weakness, the Assembly, which remembered well its own terrors, was not displeased that fear had changed sides. If you are sufficiently powerful to cause yourselves to be respected by the people, you will be sufficiently so to inspire us with dread ; that was the ruling feeling of the Côté Gauche."—P. 134.

This is precisely a picture of what always must be the feeling, in regard to tumult and disorders, of all who have committed their political existence to the waves of popular support. However much, taken individually, they may disapprove of acts of violence, yet, when they feel that intimidation of their opponents is their sheet-anchor, they cannot have an insurmountable aversion to the deeds by which that intimidation is to be effected. They would prefer, indeed, that terror should answer their purposes without the necessity of blows being actually inflicted ; but if mere threats are insufficient, they never fail to derive a secret satisfaction from the recurrence of examples calculated to show what risks the enemy runs. The burning of castles, the sacking of towns, may indeed alienate the wise and the good ; but alas ! the wise and the good form but a small proportion of mankind ; and for one whose eyes are opened by the commencement of such deeds of horror, ten will be so much overawed, as to lose all power of acting in obedience to the newly awakened and better feelings of his mind.

"Intimidation," as Lord Brougham has well observed, "is the never-failing resource of the partisans of revolution in all ages. *Mere popularity is at first the instrument by which this unsteady legislature is governed ;* but when it becomes apparent that whoever can obtain the direction or command of it must possess the whole authority of the state, parties become *less scrupulous about the means they employ for that purpose,* and soon find out that *violence and terror are infinitely more effectual and expeditious than persuasion and eloquence.* Encouraged by this state of affairs, the most daring, unprincipled, and profligate proceed to seize upon the defenceless legislature ; and, driving all their antagonists before them by violence or intimidation, enter without opposition upon the supreme functions of government. The arms, however, by which they had been victorious, are speedily turned against themselves, and those who are envious of their success, or ambitious of

their distinction, easily find means to excite discontents among the multitude, and to employ them in pulling down the very individuals whom they had so recently elevated. The disposal of the legislature then becomes a prize to be fought for in the clubs and societies of a corrupted metropolis, and the institution of a national representation has no other effect than that of laying the government open to lawless force and flagitious audacity. It was in this manner that, from the *want of a natural and efficient aristocracy to exercise the functions of hereditary legislators*, the National Assembly of France was betrayed into extravagance, and fell a prey to faction; that the institution itself became a source of public misery and disorder, and converted a civilised monarchy first into a sanguinary democracy, and then into a military despotism.”* How exactly is the progress, here so well described, applicable to these times! “Take this bill or anarchy,” says Mr Macaulay.—“Lord Grey,” says the *Times*, “has brought the country into such a state, that he must either carry the Reform Bill or incur the responsibility of a revolution.”†

Dumont, as already mentioned, was a leading member of the committee which prepared the famous declaration on the Rights of Man. He gives the following interesting account of the revolt of a candid and sagacious mind at the absurdities which a regard to the popular opinion constrained them to adopt:—

“Duroverai, Clavière, and myself, were named by Mirabeau to draw up that celebrated declaration. During the course of that mournful compilation, reflections entered my mind which had never before found a place there. I soon perceived the ridiculous nature of the undertaking. A declaration of rights, I immediately saw, may be made after the proclamation of a constitution, but not before it; for it is laws which give birth to rights—they do not follow them. Such general maxims are highly dangerous; you should never bind a legislature by general propositions, which it afterwards becomes necessary to restrain or modify. ‘Men,’ says the declaration, ‘are born free and equal;’ that is not true; they are so far from being born free, that they are born in a state of unavoidable weakness and dependence: Equal—where are they? where can they be? It is in vain to talk of equality, when such extreme difference exists, and ever must exist, between the talents, fortune, virtues, industry, and condition of men. In a word, I was so strongly impressed with the absurdity of the declaration of the Rights of Man, that for once I carried along with me the opinions of

* *Edinburgh Review*, vi. 148.

† *Times*, March 27, 1832.

our little committee ; and Mirabeau himself, when presenting the report to the Assembly, ventured to suggest difficulties, and to propose that the declaration of rights should be delayed till the constitution was completed. 'I tell you,' said he, in his forcible style, 'that any declaration of rights you may make before the constitution is framed, will only be a *one year's almanack*.' Mirabeau, always satisfied with a happy expression, never gave himself the trouble to get to the bottom of any subject, and never would go through the toil to put himself in possession of facts sufficient to defend what he advanced. On this occasion he suffered under this : this sudden change became the subject of bitter reproach. 'Who is this,' said the Jacobins, 'who seeks to employ his ascendant over the Assembly, to make us say Yes and No alternately ? Shall we be for ever the puppets of his contradictions ?' There was so much reason in what he had newly advanced, that he would have triumphed if he had been able to bring it out ; but he abandoned the attempt at the very time when several deputies were beginning to unite themselves to him. The deplorable nonsense went triumphantly on, and generated that unhappy declaration of the Rights of Man which subsequently produced such incredible mischief. I am in possession, at this moment, of a complete refutation of it, article by article, by the hand of a great master, and it proves to demonstration the contradictions, the absurdities, the dangers of that seditious composition, which of itself was sufficient to overturn the constitution of which it formed a part ; like a powder magazine placed below an edifice, which the first spark will blow into the air."—Pp. 141-2.

These are the words of sober and experienced wisdom ; and coming, as they do, from one of the authors of this celebrated declaration, are of the very highest importance. They prove, that at *the very time* when Mirabeau and the popular party in the Assembly were drawing up their perilous and highly inflammatory declaration, they were aware of its absurdity, and wished to suppress the work of their own hands. They could not do so, however, and were constrained, by the dread of losing their popularity, to throw into the bosom of an excited people a firebrand, which they themselves foresaw would speedily lead to a conflagration. Such is the desperate, the hopeless state of slavery, in which, during periods of excitement, the representatives of the mob are held by their constituents. The whole purposes of a representative form of government are at once destroyed ; the wisdom, experience, study, and reflection of the superior class of statesmen are trodden under foot ; and the enlightened have no chance of keeping possession of the reins of power, or even influencing the legislature, save by bending to the passions of the ignorant.

This consideration affords a decisive argument in favour of the close, ay, the nomination boroughs. Their existence, and their existence in considerable numbers, is indispensable

towards the voice of truth being heard in the national councils in periods of excitement, and the resistance to those measures of innovation which threaten to destroy the liberties, and terminate the prosperity of the people. From the popular representatives, during such periods, it is in vain to expect the language of truth ; for it would be as unpalatable to the sovereign multitude as to a sovereign despot. Members of the legislature, therefore, are indispensably necessary in considerable numbers, who, by having *no popular constituents, can venture to speak out the truth in periods of agitation, innovation, and alarm.* The Reformers ask, What is the use of a representative of a green mound, or a ruined tower, in a popular parliament ? We answer, that he is more indispensable in such a parliament than in any other ; nay, that without such a class, the liberties of the nation cannot exist in reality, whatever they may do in form, for any length of time. Representatives constantly acting under the influence or dread of popular constituents, never will venture, either in their speeches to give vent to the language of truth, or in their conduct to support the cause of real freedom. They will always be as much under the influence of their tyrannical taskmasters, as Mirabeau and Dumont were in drawing up, against their better judgment, the Rights of Man. It is as absurd to expect rational or independent measures from such a class, as it is to look for freedom of conduct from the senate of Tiberius or the council of Napoleon. We do not expect the truth to be spoken by the representative of a mound, in a question with its owner or with his class in society, nor by the representatives of the people, in a question which interests or excites the public ambition. But we expect that truth will be spoken by the representatives of the people, as against the interests of the owner of the mound : and by the representatives of the mound, as against the passions of the people ; and that thus, between the two, the language of reason will be raised on every subject, and that fatal bias of the public mind prevented, which arises from one set of doctrines and principles being alone presented to its consideration, or one set of interests being alone attended to by the legislature. In the superior fearlessness and vigour of the language of the Conservative party in the House of

Lords, to what is exhibited in the House of Commons, on the Reform question, is to be found decisive evidence of the truth of these principles, and their application to this country and this age.

Of the fatal 4th August, "the St Barthelemy of properties," as it was well styled by Rivarol, and its ruinous consequences upon the public welfare, we have the following striking and graphic account:—

"Never was such an undertaking accomplished in so short a time. That which would have required a year of care, meditation, and debate, was proposed, deliberated on, and voted by acclamation. I know not how many laws were decreed in that one sitting; the abolition of feudal rights, of tithes, of provincial privileges; three articles which, of themselves, embraced a complete system of jurisprudence and politics, with ten or twelve others, were decided in less time than would be required, in England, for the first reading of a bill of ordinary importance. They began with a report on the disorders of the provinces, chateaus burnt, troops of banditti who attacked the nobles and ravaged the fields. The Duke d'Aiguillon, the Duke de Noailles, and several others of the democratic part of the nobility, after the most disastrous pictures of these calamities, exclaimed, that nothing but a great act of generosity could calm the people, and that it was high time to abandon their odious privileges, and let the people taste the full benefits of the Revolution. An indescribable effervescence seized upon the Assembly. Every one proposed some sacrifice: every one laid some offering on the altar of their country, proposing either to denude themselves or denude others; no time was allowed for reflection, objection, or argument; a sentimental contagion seized every heart. That renunciation of privileges, that abandonment of so many rights burdensome to the people, these multiplied sacrifices, had an air of magnanimity which withdrew the attention from the fatal precipitance with which they were made. I saw on that night many good and worthy deputies who literally wept for joy at seeing the work of regeneration advance so rapidly, and at feeling themselves every instant carried on the wings of enthusiasm so far beyond their most ardent hopes. The renunciation of the privileges of provinces was made by their respective representatives; those of Brittany had engaged to defend them, and therefore they were more embarrassed than the rest; but, carried away by the general enthusiasm, they advanced in a body, and declared in a body, that they would use their utmost efforts with their constituents to obtain the renunciation of their privileges. That great and superb operation was necessary to confer political unity upon a monarchy which had been successively formed by the union of many independent states, every one of which had certain rights of its own anterior to their being blended together.

"On the following day, every one began to reflect on what had been done, and sinister presentiments arose on all sides. Mirabeau and Sièyes, in particular, who had not been present at that famous sitting, condemned in loud terms its enthusiastic follies. This is a true picture of France, said they; we spend a month in disputing about words, and we make sacrifices in a night which overturn everything that is venerable in the monarchy. In the subsequent meetings, they tried to retract or modify some of these enormous concessions, but it was too late; it was impossible to withdraw what the people already looked upon as their rights. The Abbé Sièyes, in particular, made a discourse full of reason and justice against *the extinction of tithes*, which he looked upon with the utmost aversion. He demonstrated,

that to extinguish the tithes, was to despoil the clergy of their property, solely to enrich the proprietors of the lands; for every one having bought or inherited his estate *minus* the value of the tithe, found himself suddenly enriched by a tenth, which was given to him as a pure and uncalled-for gratuity. It was this speech, *which never can be refuted*, which terminated with the well-known expression,—‘They would be free, and they know not how to be just.’ The prejudice was so strong that Sièyes himself was not listened to; he was regarded merely as an ecclesiastic, who could not get the better of his personal interest, and paid that tribute of error to his gown. A little more would have made him be hooted and hissed. I saw him the next day, full of bitter indignation against the injustice and brutality of the Assembly, which, in truth, he never afterwards forgave. He gave vent to his indignation in a conversation with Mirabeau, who replied, ‘*My dear Abbé, you have unchained the bull, do you expect he is not to gore with his horns?*’

“These decrees of 4th Aug. were so far from putting a period to the robberies and violence which desolated the country, that they only tended to make the people acquainted with their own strength, and impress them with the conviction that all their outrages against the nobility would not only not be punished, but actually rewarded. Again, I say, everything which is done from fear fails in accomplishing its object; *those whom you expect to disarm by concessions, only redouble in confidence and audacity.*”—Pp. 146-149.

Such is the conclusion of this enlightened French reformer, as to the consequences of the innovations and concessions in promoting which he took so large a share, and which, it was then confidently expected, would not only pacify the people but regenerate the monarchy, and commence a new era in the history of the world. These opinions coming from the author of the Rights of Man, the preceptor of Mirabeau, the fellow-labourer of Bentham, should, if anything can, open the eyes of our young enthusiasts, who are so vehement in urging the necessity of concession, avowedly from the effects of intimidation—who expect to “let loose the bull and escape his horns.”

It is on this question of the effects to be expected from concession to public clamour, that the whole question of Reform hinges. The supporters of the bill, in both Houses, have abandoned every other argument. “Pass this bill, *or* anarchy will ensue,” is their sole principle of action. But what says Dumont, taught by the errors of the Constituent Assembly? “Pass this bill, *and* anarchy will ensue.” “Whatever is done,” says he, “from fear, fails in its object; those whom you expect to disarm by concession, redouble in confidence and audacity.” This is the true principle; the principle confirmed by universal experience; and yet the Reformers shut their eyes to its application. The events

which have occurred in this age are so decisive on this subject, that nothing more convincing could be imagined if a voice from the dead were to proclaim its truth.

Concession, as Dumont tells us, and as every one acquainted with history knows, was tried by the French government and Assembly, in the hope of calming the people, and arresting the Revolution. The monarch, soon after the opening of the States-General, made "greater concessions than ever king made to his people;" the nobles abandoned, on their own motion, in one night, all their rights; and what was the consequence? The revolutionary fervour was urged into a fury; the torrent became a cataract, and horrors unparalleled in the history of the world ensued.

Resistance to popular ambition, a firm opposition to the cry for Reform, was at the same period, under a lion-hearted King and an intrepid Minister, adopted in the midst of the greatest dangers by the British government. What was the consequence? Universal tranquillity—forty years of unexampled prosperity—the triumph of Trafalgar—the conquest of Waterloo.

Conciliation and concession, in obedience to popular clamour, and with the professed design of healing the disturbances of that unhappy land, were next tried in Ireland. Universal tranquillity, contentment, and happiness were promised from the great healing measure of emancipation. What has been the consequence? Disturbances, massacres, discord, practised sedition, threatened rebellion, which have made the old times of Protestant rule be regretted.

Conciliation and concession were again put in practice by the Whig Administration of England. What was the result? Perils greater than assailed the monarchy from all the might of Napoleon; dissension, conflagration, and popular violence, unexampled since the Great Rebellion; a falling income and an increasing expenditure; the flames of a servile war in Jamaica; and general distress unequalled since the accession of the House of Brunswick.

The character of Mirabeau, both as a writer and orator, and an individual, is sketched with no ordinary power by this author, probably better qualified than any man in existence to portray it with accuracy:—

"Mirabeau had within his breast a sense of the force of his mind, which

sustained his courage in situations which would have crushed a person of ordinary character: his imagination loved the vast; his mind seized the gigantic; his taste was natural, and had been cultivated by the study of the classical authors. He knew little; but no one could make a better use of what he had acquired. During the whirlwind of his stormy life he had little leisure for study; but in his prison of Vincennes he had read extensively, and improved his style by translations, as well as by extensive collections from the writings of great orators. He had little confidence in the extent of his erudition; but his eloquent and impassioned soul animated every feature of his countenance when he was moved, and nothing was easier than to inflame his imagination. From his youth upwards he had accustomed himself to the discussion of the great questions of erudition and government, but he was not calculated to go to the bottom of them. The labour of investigation was not adapted to his powers; he had too much warmth and vehemence of disposition for laborious application; his mind proceeded by leaps and bounds, but sometimes they were prodigious. His style abounded in vigorous expressions, of which he had made a particular study.

"If we consider him as an author, we must recollect that all his writings, without one single exception, were pieces of Mosaic, in which his fellow-labourers had at least as large a share as himself; but he had the faculty of giving additional eclat to their labours, by throwing in here and there original expressions, or apostrophes, full of fire and eloquence. It is a peculiar talent, to be able in this manner to disinter obscure ability, entrust to each the department for which he is fitted, and induce them all to labour at a work of which he alone is to reap the glory.

"As a political orator, he was in some respects gifted with the very highest talents—a quick eye, a sure tact, the art of discovering at once the true disposition of the assembly he was addressing, and applying all the force of his mind to overcome the point of resistance, without weakening it by the discussion of minor topics. No one knew better how to strike with a single word, or hit his mark with perfect precision; and frequently he thus carried with him the general opinion, either by a happy insinuation, or by a stroke which intimidated his adversaries. In the tribune he was immovable. The waves of faction rolled around without shaking him, and he was master of his passions in the midst of the utmost vehemence of opposition. But what he wanted as a political orator, was the art of discussion on the topics on which he enlarged. He could not embrace a long series of proofs and reasonings, and was unable to refute in a logical or convincing manner. He was, in consequence, often obliged to abandon the most important motions, when hard pressed by his adversaries, from pure inability to refute their arguments. He embraced too much, and reflected too little. He plunged into a discourse made for him on a subject on which he had never reflected, and on which he had been at no pains to master the facts; and he was, in consequence, greatly inferior in that particular to the *athletæ* who exhibit their powers in the British Parliament."—P. 277.

What led to the French Revolution? This question will be asked and discussed, with all the anxiety it deserves, to the end of the world. Let us hear Dumont on the subject:—

"No event ever interested Europe so much as the meeting of the States-General. There was no enlightened man who did not found the greatest hopes upon that public struggle of prejudices with the lights of the age, and who did not believe that a new moral and political world was about to issue from the chaos. The *besoin* of hope was so strong, that all faults were pardoned, all misfortunes were represented only as accident; in spite of all the calami-

ties which it induced, the balance leaned always towards the Constituent Assembly. It was the struggle of humanity with despotism.

“The States-General, six weeks after their convocation, were no longer the States-General, but the National Assembly. Its first calamity was to have owed its new title to a revolution; that is to say, to a vital change in its power, its essence, its name, and its means of authority. According to the constitution, the commons should have acted in conjunction with the nobles, the clergy, and the king. But the commons, in the very outset, *subjugated the nobles, the clergy, and the king. It was in that, that the Revolution consisted.*

“Reasoning without end has taken place on the causes of the Revolution; there is but one, in my opinion, to which the whole is to be ascribed; and that is, the *character of the king*. Put a king of *character and firmness in the place of Louis XVI.*, and no revolution would have ensued. His whole reign was a preparation for it. There was not a single epoch, during the whole Constituent Assembly, in which the king, if he could only have changed his character, might not have re-established his authority, and created a mixed constitution far more solid and stable than the ancient monarchy. His indecision, his weakness, his half counsels, his want of foresight, ruined everything. The inferior causes which concurred were nothing but the necessary consequence of that one moving cause. When the king is known to be weak, the courtiers become intriguers, the factious insolent, the people audacious; good men are intimidated, the most faithful services go unrewarded, able men are disgusted, and ruinous councils adopted. A king possessed of dignity and firmness would have drawn to his side those who were against him; the Lafayettes, the Lameths, the Mirabeaus, the Sièyes, would never have dreamed of playing the part which they did; and, when directed to other objects, they would no longer have appeared the same men.”—Pp. 343, 344.

These observations are of the very highest importance. The elements of discord, rebellion, and anarchy rise into portentous energy when weakness is at the head of affairs. A reforming—in other words, a democratic, Administration rouses them into a perfect tempest. The progress of time, and the immense defects of the ancient monarchical system, rendered change necessary in France; but it was the weakness of the king, the concessions of the nobility and clergy, which converted it into revolution. All the miseries of that country sprang from the very principle which is incessantly urged as the ruling consideration in favour of the Reform Bill.

No body of men ever inflicted such disasters on France as the Constituent Assembly, by their headlong innovations and sweeping demolitions. Not the sword of Marlborough nor the victories of Wellington; not the carnage of Agincourt nor the rout of Waterloo; not the arms of Alexander nor the ambition of Napoleon, have proved so fatal to its prosperity. From the wounds these inflicted, the social system may revive; from those of her own innovators

recovery is impossible. They not only destroyed freedom in its cradle, they not only induced the most cruel and revolting tyranny, but they totally destroyed the materials from which freedom could have been reconstructed in future; they bequeathed slavery to their children, and they prevented it from ever being shaken off by their descendants. It matters not under what name arbitrary power is administered: it can be dealt out as rudely by a reforming assembly, a dictatorial mob, a Committee of Public Salvation, a tyrannical Directory, a military despot, or a Citizen King, as by an absolute monarch or a haughty nobility. By destroying the whole ancient institutions of France—by annihilating the nobles and middle ranks, who stood between the people and the Throne—by subverting all the laws and customs of antiquity—by extirpating religion, and inducing general profligacy, they have inflicted wounds upon their country which can never be healed. Called upon to revive the social system, they destroyed it: instead of pouring into the decayed limbs the warm blood of youth, they severed the head from the body, and all subsequent efforts have been unavailing to restore animation. It is now as impossible to give genuine freedom, that is, complete protection to *all* classes, to France, as it is to restore the vital spark to a lifeless body by the convulsions of electricity. The balance of interests, the protecting classes, are destroyed; nothing remains but the populace and the Government: Asiatic has succeeded to European civilisation; and, instead of the long life of modern freedom, the brief tempests of anarchy and the long night of despotism are its fate.

The Constituent Assembly, however, had the excuse of general delusion; they were entering on an untrodden field; the consequences of their actions were unknown; enthusiasm irresistible urged on their steps. Great reforms required to be made in the political system; they mistook the excesses of democratic ambition for the dictates of ameliorating wisdom; the corruption of a guilty court, and the vices of a degraded nobility, called loudly for amendment. But what shall we say to those who adventured on the same perilous course, with the fatal example of France before their eyes, in a country requiring no accession to popular power, tyrannised over by no haughty nobility, consumed by

no internal vices, weakened by no foreign disasters? What shall we say to those who voluntarily shut their eyes to all the perils of the headlong reformers of the neighbouring kingdom; who roused passions as impetuous, proposed changes in the representation as sweeping, were actuated by ambition as perilous, as that which, under their own eyes, had torn civilisation to pieces in its bleeding dominion? What shall we say to those who did this in the state where freedom had existed longer, and was at their accession more unfettered, than in any other country that ever existed; where prosperity unexampled existed, and virtue uncorrupted was to be found, and glory unparalleled had been won? Who adventured on a course which threatened to tear in pieces the country of Milton and Bacon, of Scott and Newton, of Nelson and Wellington? History will judge their conduct; no tumultuous mobs will drown its voice; from its decision there will be no appeal, and its voice will be the voice of ages.

THE BRITISH SCHOOL OF PAINTING

[BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, JULY 1836]

WHY have we not as great painters in England as Raphael, Claude Lorraine, and Michael Angelo? That genius to conceive, and taste to execute great designs in the fine arts are not wanting, is obvious from the immortal works which we have produced in other departments. What modern state can compare with the nation which can boast of Shakspeare and Milton, of Gray and Thomson, of Scott and Byron, of Wordsworth and Southey, not to mention a host of others who have won the highest renown in the field of poetry? In the higher branches of music, also, in sacred oratorios, and the simplicity and pathos of pastoral or lyric song, we occupy at least a respectable place in the great republic of genius. But in painting, whether in the historical, landscape, Flemish, or portrait school, we are still decidedly inferior not only to our Continental predecessors, but in some of these branches even to the artists who formerly flourished in our own country. This is a melancholy truth; we are aware it will be felt as a severe, perhaps an unjust observation, by the many men of genius who now adorn our galleries; but knowledge of error is the first step to excellence, and undeserved praise, by relaxing the efforts of industry, is the certain guide to mediocrity.

The true test of the excellence of any production of the human mind is to be found in the estimation in which it is held long after the author's decease, and when all the adventitious circumstances which formerly threw a false lustre or unjust gloom around it have long ceased to exist. Fortune has a large share in the celebrity of every living author, whether in literature or art. The race is in the end

to the swift, and the battle to the strong, but this is far from being the case in the outset, or even during the lifetime of the artist himself. The well-known facts of Milton selling the *Paradise Lost* for ten pounds, and of Campbell being long unable to find any bookseller who would buy the *Pleasures of Hope*, are instances of the extreme inequality with which the smiles of public favour are often in the first instance dealt out to the greatest works of genius. But in painting, and especially portrait painting, chance and fashion have so large a share in the formation of public opinion on every artist's merits, especially in this country, that no opinion can be formed of what celebrity is likely to be durable till after, and long after, the artist's death. A fashionable and beautiful woman, a statesman of celebrity, a hero of renown, sits for a portrait. The likeness is happy, the original is celebrated; a few of the leading journals dwell on the merits of the picture; it becomes a matter of fashion to go and see it; a sign of taste and travelled acquirement to admire it; and very soon the artist, with perhaps no very large stock of real ability, finds himself at the head of his profession, flattered on all sides, overloaded with orders, and, in his own opinion at least, equal to Titian or Vandyke.

Then begins, and that rapidly too, the period of decline. He comes to grudge his labour on each picture, when he knows that so many other orders are awaiting him, from which to gain greater celebrity and more extensive riches. He soon discovers that nine-tenths of the world who come to sit for their pictures, to wonder or admire, are totally unable to judge of anything but the likeness, and he insensibly acquires the habit of throwing in as much merit as will satisfy the public, *and no more*. He finds that he gets his two or three hundred guineas, provided only that his pictures are like, equally whether they are good or bad; and thus, between the prestige of fashion, the intoxication of flattery, the love of money, and the seductions of ease, the artist, surrounded by an ignorant, wealthy, and indiscriminating body of admirers, is gradually led down from all his youthful aspirations of excellence and talents, which, if cherished and hardened in the school of severe competi-

tion, and under the eye of a public who could distinguish good works from bad, might have led, after ten years of poverty and twenty years of labour, to the highest excellence in his noble art. He descends by regular gradations through fame, fashion, wealth, and celebrity, to mediocrity and ultimate oblivion. We have no individuals in view in these remarks; we speak of the tendencies of things, not of particular men. And we know not one but many artists, both in England and Scotland, who, by being chastened by reflection, and possibly chilled by early criticism, have talents at this moment adequate to render them, after half a lifetime of laborious exertion, rivals of the greatest masters of the Italian and Flemish schools. It is not men or talents which we want: it is customs and habits, and a discerning public to form men.

Time, it is often said, makes sad havoc with a gallery of beauties. With equal truth it may be said, that it makes sad havoc with the painters of beauties. Even the great reputation of Sir Thomas Lawrence is sensibly declining, as his portraits cease to be the image of living charms or celebrity, and are transformed into the gallery of the dead, where each work is estimated by its intrinsic worth. The genius and talent, the vigour and originality of Sir Joshua Reynolds, indeed, stand pre-eminent, and, as indications of a great mind, must ever command the admiration of mankind; but, considered as monuments of art, and compared with the great works of the Italian school, with Raphael, Titian, or Correggio, or with Velasquez or Murillo in the Spanish, though equal in conception, they are altogether inferior in colouring and execution. Such as they are, however, they are beyond all question at the head of the English school of historical and portrait painting. This distinctly and at once appeared at the exhibition of the works of Reynolds, West, and Lawrence, in Pall Mall some years ago. Sir Joshua stood immeasurably at the head; next came Lawrence, whose full-length portrait of Kemble in the character of Hamlet showed what a glorious artist he *might* have been, while most of his other works demonstrated what he actually was, under the combined influence of fashion, high prices, and an undiscerning public. West's immense historical pieces, amidst some talent,

exhibited far too much of the French opera school of painting to be worthy of being named as rivals of the great works of ancient art.

Turn to landscape-painting, the branch of art in which England has been long supposed to stand unrivalled, and in which certainly a greater degree of encouragement is afforded to professional men at this time, than in the same line over all Europe besides. Beautiful colourists, admirable draughtsmen, authors of undoubted genius and prolific fancy we undoubtedly have; but is there one whose works are to be compared with

“Whate’er Lorraine light touched with softening hue,
Or Savage Rosa dashed, or learned Poussin drew”?

Unquestionably there is not. There is a richness, a generality of effect, combined with accuracy of detail, in these artists—in technical language, a union of breadth with finishing—which we look for in vain in any works of the present or last century. Turner! we hear our partial and enthusiastic countrymen exclaim,—Turner at least is superior to them all; in him are to be found alternately the softness and glow of Claude’s sunsets, the savage grandeur of Salvator’s conceptions, and the classic erudition of Poussin’s scenes of ruin. Most certainly it is far from our design to depreciate the wonderful originality and variety of Turner’s imagination; or to deny that the artist who could conceive the scenes in the *Liber Studiorum*, and draw the series of views in the valley of Aosta, possessed gigantic powers, capable of combating the great masters of Italian landscape each in his own line. But has he done so? Has he produced scenes which will stand the test of ages, like the Claudes in the Doria Palace at Rome or the National Gallery in London, or the Salvators in the Palazzo Pitti at Florence? This is the point: not what could he do, but what has he done? With the highest and profoundest admiration for the powers of his mind, truth here compels the admission, that none of his works will bear a comparison with the masterpieces of these great men; and his genius is too great to descend to a competition with artists of inferior reputation.

Among other living artists, the attention is forcibly arrested by Copley Fielding in London, and Thomson at

Edinburgh. No one will be so bold as to deny to the former the merit of consummate delicacy in the management of the pencil; a Claudelike richness in foliage, and the happiest delineation of the varying effects of coast scenery; or to the latter a depth of shade, vigour of conception, and strength of colouring, which place him among the most accomplished artists of the present day; but will either the one or the other stand the ordeal with Poussin, Ruysdael, Claude Lorraine, or Salvator Rosa? These truly eminent men will see at once in what rank we estimate their genius, when we place them in line with such compeers. And why should they not equal, nay, excel them? Why should not the wild magnificence of the Scottish lakes, or the rich finishing of the Cumberland valleys, or the savage grandeur of the coast scenery of Devonshire, inspire our painters as they have done our poets, and produce a Scott, a Wilson, or a Southey in the sister art?

Turn to the minute and Flemish school: Is Great Britain equal to its Continental rivals in that department? Great efforts have there unquestionably been made, and the names of Wilkie and Allan will at once occur to every one, as affording decisive evidence that in that line at least these strictures are undeserved. Highly, however, as we estimate the admirable works of these truly original and gifted men, we yet must admit that much remains for them to do ere they attain to the highest honours of their own branch of art. In conception and drawing they are admirable; but it is breadth and generality of effect which are wanting. Masses of shade, dark colour, great surfaces of brown and black, are what we desire in their works. They have had their attention so riveted by the details which they finish with such admirable skill, that they have lost sight of the general impression of the picture. Hence their works have a partial and spotted appearance, which offers a striking contrast to the uniform effect and breadth of shade which characterise the works of Rembrandt, Teniers, and Ostade. The admirable pieces of these British artists appear excellent when seen by themselves; but place them in a gallery of old pictures in the same line: transport them to the Stadthouse at Amsterdam, the King's Gallery at Munich, or the Flemish Room at Dresden, and the

truth of this will appear at once conspicuous. Each figure is shaded perfectly in itself ; but the general massing of the whole is forgotten, and there is no one definite impression made on the mind of the spectator. Each group is well rounded in itself ; but a general light and shade over the whole bunch, as required in Titian's well known metaphor of the grapes, to characterise every good painting, is wanting.

It is in vain to assert, as a reason and excuse for this manifest inferiority, that we have not yet arrived at that age of national existence, or that period in the history of art, when excellence naturally arises. Experience proves the reverse in every department. In truth, so far is art from advancing, like national wealth or power, to eminence by slow degrees, that it usually ascends at once by a sudden flight to the utmost excellence, and declines through a long succession of ages. Compare the marbles of Egina with those of the Parthenon ; yet no long period intervened between the erection of the former in a stiff, homely style, and the formation of the latter with the incomparable ease, life, and animation, which has defied the rivalry of every succeeding age.

Look at the stiff pictures of Pietro Perugino, or the early paintings of his scholar Raphael, and you see what the art was in the youth of that wonderful man. Turn to the Assumption of Dresden, the Madonna del Foligno, or the Madonna della Seggiola at Florence, and you see that painting had advanced from mediocrity to perfection in the lifetime of one individual, who died at the age of thirty-seven. The immortal designs of Michael Angelo in the Sistine Chapel, the exquisite finishing of Leonardo da Vinci at Milan, were all completed in the infancy of the art to the south of the Alps ; and at a period when, to the north of them, the savage barons of England sat in rooms strewn with rushes, and, from inability to write, dipped their gauntlet in ink to sign deeds. It is the same in architecture : the imposing monuments of ancient Egypt arose in the very infancy of art, with a sublimity which subsequent ages have sought in vain to imitate ; and the stately piles of the Gothic Cathedrals, a vast and original step in architectural knowledge, were brought to perfection in England and France

within fifty years, amidst the bloodshed of a barbarous age, and by a race of men of whose existence and attainments history has hardly preserved a record.

Nay, what is still more striking, and tells with decisive effect upon this argument, painting, at least in one branch, had attained much greater excellence, both in England and Scotland, at a remote period, than it has since attained. Take any person moderately versed in art into a picture gallery, where modern and ancient portraits are blended together, and, neglecting the works of West, Lawrence, and Beechy, he will fix at once on the old paintings of Vandyke and Sir Peter Lely. Raeburn, of Edinburgh, will strive in vain, except in a few of his most admirable pieces, to maintain his ground against Jamieson, who flourished in Scotland two hundred years before. There is a depth of shade, a minuteness of finishing, a perfection of detail, and, at the same time, a generality of effect about these old portraits, which rivets the admiration through every succeeding age. Observe that bearded old senator of Titian. The face is brought out in bold relief by a profusion of dark shadow—the thin locks of the hair, the thick curls of the beard are represented with miniature accuracy—beneath the shaggy eyebrows the dark eyes still gleam forth with the fire of talent—the rich velvet robe glistens as if the light was yet shining on its glossy surface—every vein in the hands is portrayed to the life. Draw near to that inimitable portrait by Vandyke ; it is a nobleman of the seventeenth century, a compeer of Charles I. The dark curls of the hair hang down on either side of the manly but melancholy visage ; handsome features, a Roman cast of countenance, an aristocratic air, bespeak the object of lady's love ; armour glances beneath his rich cloak, a broad ruff surrounds his neck, a brilliant scarf adorns his breast ; every object in the whole piece is finished with the pencil of the finest miniature painter ; while over the whole, genius has thrown the broad and uniform light of its own illumination. You are captivated by that full-length portrait of a celebrated beauty in the galaxy of Charles II.—the auburn locks, with playful grace, descend upon the exquisite neck and shoulders ; the laughing eyes, the smiling lip, the arched eyebrow, tell the coquetry of youth and beauty ; the envious veil half

conceals, half displays the swelling bosom ; the delicate waist, clad in satin stomacher, tapers almost beyond what modern fashion can imitate or modern beauty desire ; the rich Brussels lace is portrayed with inimitable skill on the shoulders ; every fold of the satin dress still shines with the lustre of day. The drapery behind, whose dark shade brings out the figure ; the rich Turkey carpet ; the white satin slipper and slender ancle, resting on a velvet stool ; the little lap-dog in the corner of the piece ; the gorgeous jewels in the bosom, are all delineated with the skill of the greatest master of still life—it tells you that the fame of Sir Peter Lely stands on a durable foundation. After drinking down draughts of admiration at these admirable models, which stand in fresh and undecaying brilliancy on the canvass after the lapse of centuries, turn to that half-faded portrait a century younger. The colours have in great part disappeared ; the dress is so grotesque, and in such an extreme of now antiquated fashion, as to excite surprise rather than admiration ; the face evinces the traces of loveliness, the figure and air give unequivocal marks of no ordinary talent ; but the background is unfinished ; the drapery is coarse ; the whole is the ghost of genius, not its finished and living offspring ; it shows that Sir Joshua, with all his powers, is not destined in portrait-painting to stand the test of ages. Turn next to that smiling cherub whose face shines like the sun emerging from clouds, from amidst the blue and misty atmosphere with which it is surrounded. The eyes are brilliant ; the golden locks beautiful ; the lips seem made for love ; but the whole is a brilliant sketch, not a finished picture ; the figure is evanescent and misty ; the background hardly distinguishable ; the extremities finished by an inferior hand ; a hundred years hence it will be deemed the dream of genius, not its waking monument ; and the great name of Sir Thomas Lawrence will be consigned to comparative obscurity. That illustrious man's picture of George IV. excited unqualified admiration in this country ; but when it was sent as a present to the Pope, and placed beside the monuments of ancient art in the Vatican, it fell at once from its lofty pedestal, and was felt to be a third-rate production when compared to the great works of ancient days.

The defect which runs through modern paintings, and

renders them unfit to bear a comparison with the masterpieces of the Italian school, is, that they are either too general or too special ; in technical language, breadth or detail has too exclusively riveted the artist's attention. They want that combination of minuteness of finishing with generality of effect which characterises the scenes of nature, and is to be seen in the productions of all the artists who have risen to durable eminence in imitating her works. Draw near to that masterpiece of Claude. The sun is setting behind the bay of Naples ; a golden light illuminates the horizon, which blends by imperceptible gradation with the cerulean blue of the upper part of the firmament ; a rich mass of foliage overhanging the water on the right hand is projected on the glowing surface ; every leaf appears on the almost insufferable brightness of the illumination behind ; a ruined temple rises in shadow beneath its broad extending branches ; a light breeze sweeps over the surface of the waters ; the little waves rise and dance to catch the dying radiance, then sink into the shades of night ; light barks seem to sport on the glittering bosom of the main ; the branches of wood on the other side, gently fanned by the breath, turn their fairy ringlets to the refreshing gale ; all nature seems to enjoy the delicious fragrance of the hour.

“ Ah, County Guy, the hour is nigh,
 The sun has left the lea ;
 The orange-flower perfumes the bower,
 The breeze is on the sea.
 The lark his lay who trilled all day
 Sits hushed his partner nigh ;
 Breeze, bird, and flower confess the hour,
 But where is County Guy ? ”

You are intoxicated with the beauties of this inimitable work ; turn to yonder dark and savage piles which rise up under the magic hand of Salvator. Harsh and gloomy are its features ; a scene in the wilderness of rocks and woods,

“ Where Nature loves to sit alone,
 Majestic on her craggy throne.”

In the centre of the piece a torrent issues from an obscure recess overhung with dark embowering woods, and, approaching the edge of a precipice, descends in foaming volumes to the abyss beneath ; blue cliffs clothed with pine fill up the distant parts of the landscape ; the foreground is choked with a chaos of rocks and stems ; on the right, is a precipice,

in whose savage recesses a scanty brushwood can hardly find space for its roots ; on the left a vast tree, scathed by lightning, has fallen across the stupendous masses of rock which obstruct the lower part of the valley, and compose the foreground ; a bright gleam has fallen on their broad surface, and in the crevices between them, the spears and helmets of armed men tell that the den of banditti is at hand. A " browner horror " seems to have been thrown over the woods ; a savage grandeur characterises the whole. But examine the details ; look into the corners of the piece, scan the objects which lie hid to ordinary eyes under the broad masses of shade, and you will see the minuteness, the perfection of nature. The whole is sketched with the rapidity of a master's hand, but finished with the accuracy of a consummate artist's execution. Turn to that admirable piece of Ruysdael ; it is a scene in the forest of Ardennes. Old oaks in the front stretch their gnarled and twisted arms across the piece ; in the huge bulk of their stems is to be seen the furrows and the decay of age ; a profusion of ferns and weeds, finished with inimitable skill, compose the foreground. A solitary river spreads its still surface in the middle-ground, beneath luxuriant woods, which close it in at a little distance ; wild-fowl are to be seen on its banks ; the long neck of the crane, the thin shanks of the heron, rise amidst the reeds which encumber its margin ; a rustic path winds through this scene of solitude ; and a little vista seen under the branches of the oak on the right hand, looks out into sunshine and palings, and the cottage of man embosomed with trees. These are the immortal works of landscape-painting ; and, widely as they differ in character and external appearances, the ruling principle which regulated the artist's thought is the same in them all. In all, one prevailing thought is to be seen, one general impression was sought to be awakened, one emotion excited in the breast of the spectator ; and the artist's skill consisted in the felicity with which he conceived, and the truth with which he executed that combination of objects which were calculated to unite in the production of that prevailing feeling. Painting has its laws as well as the drama ; but it is not a unity of time, place, and action which is required, but of sentiment, association, and emotion.

It is the same with historical pictures. Behold that exquisite Mother and Child of Raphael. Benevolence, sweetness, maternal love are radiant in her countenance ; she embraces her infant with all the fondness of a mother's heart ; the cherub is fondling the much-beloved bosom ; St John is kneeling at her feet ; his wild eye and camel-hair garb bespeak the child of the desert ; his elbows rest on her knees ; he is looking up to share the envied smile. It is not a Hebrew woman, nor a Grecian woman, nor a Roman woman that is here delineated ; it is WOMAN and woman's love that is expressed in a manner which has no locality, and will speak to the end of the world to all the best, the holiest, because the earliest feelings of Man. Mark that hero who is riding on a snowy charger through the ranks of death ; blood-stained ice is beneath his horse's hoofs ; black volumes of smoke are blowing over his head ; clad in the richest furs, his attendant officers are shivering under the blasts of winter ; the savage wildness of the Cossack, the stern resolution of the Russian, the enthusiastic gallantry of the Frenchman are still portrayed in the corpses which in mingled confusion cumber the plain ; but the soul of the hero, superior alike to the fury of the elements and the horrors of war, looks with mild equanimity over the ghastly scene, and the eye of the Emperor fascinates the soul from the steadfast lustre of its gaze. It is Napoleon riding over the battlefield of Eylau, in which the genius of Le Gros has reproduced, untainted by the meretricious phantasy of Parisian taste, the severe simplicity of ancient art.* From this scene of horror turn to the deathbed of yonder saint, where breathes the chastened piety and divine conceptions of Domenichino. The clay is not yet deserted by its earthly tenant ; the smile of hope, the radiance of faith, the sweetness of charity, still linger round his expiring lips ; the grief of his earthly attendants is passionate and uncontrollable ; but the closing eyes of the dying saint are fixed on the choir of angels, which give, even in the hour of death, a foretaste of the joys of eternity, and from the lustre of whose heavenly glow a serene radiance is thrown over the scene of dissolution. These are the great

* This admirable painting is to be seen in the gallery of Versailles. When the British artists have equalled, they may criticise it.

and immortal works of art; and in all is to be seen the same principle clearly exemplified—perfection of detail combined with unity of effect and generality of expression.

It is the same, in a still more striking manner, with the works of nature. What miniature painter's hand can ever rival the minuteness with which every leaf, every pebble, every cloud is finished; and what inspiration of genius can pour over the whole the harmonious expression with which in her brighter moments she is invested? Ascend yonder rocky eminence, on whose embattled summits the gigantic columns of former days still stand, as if imperishable amidst the revolution of ages. The setting sun throws a flood of liquid gold over the exquisite remains; every niche in the cornice, every flute in the pillars, every projection in the sculpture, stands forth as sharp as if the sun shone for the first time on the inimitable work. Dim descried through the purple glow which the setting luminary throws over the distant landscape, the slopes of Hymettus catch his parting rays; gleaming through projecting mountains, the gulf of Salamis is resplendent with light; while on the verge of the horizon the citadel of Corinth, the mountains of Peloponnesus, stand forth like distant giants in that sea of glory. Climb to the summit of that lofty peak, the grisly Craon, on the southern side of the valley of Aosta. It is the hour of noon; silence deep as death prevails in those lofty solitudes; not the flutter of an insect, not the wing of a bird is to be heard in the dread expanse. Right opposite, face to face with the pinnacle on which you rest, stands the hoary summit of Mont Blanc; a precipice ten thousand feet in depth, furrowed by innumerable cliffs, bristling with innumerable peaks, descends from its snow-clad heights to the glaciers of the Allée Blanche, which lies spread like a map at your feet. In still and awful solitude, the monarch of the mountains rears his head into the dark blue vault of heaven; a glittering mantle of snow covers his shoulders; the eternal granite has spread a rugged girdle round his breast; in peace and silence the summer sun sleeps on his bosom; even the thin clouds of an Italian sky hover at a distance from the resplendent throne. Drink! drink deep of the draught of admiration at the matchless spectacle; life has scarce a

similar moment of heaven-born rapture to bestow!* Descend from the dizzy pinnacle; enter the glades of yonder aged forest, where the stems of the chestnut of primeval growth arise in wild confusion from a wilderness of rocks. Darkness deep as night lies beneath this massy shade; not a ray of the sun can pierce their leafy canopy; rude crosses placed at intervals guide the traveller in the steep ascent; but far distant on the right, in the mountain above, a vista opens; a verdant plain amidst wooded cliffs is seen, the pine-trees overhang a monastic pile, and the sun of Italy shines on the towers of Vallombrosa. Turn to the beetling cliffs of that raging ocean, which foams and boils against its immovable barrier; the dark rocks stand in grim horror amidst the driving tempest; heaving on "its mighty swing" the billows rise, with a sound like thunder, midway up the steep; with frightful rapidity wave after wave is rolled to its foot; black rocks surmounting the eddying surge at times appear, and speedily are lost amidst the roar of waters; the clouds drive in gloomy grandeur against the heath-clad cape which breasts the storm, on whose bosom, far above the rage of the waves, stands the dark and unshaken castle of feudal power; and say if Scotland has no scenes of sublimity to exhibit, and aught in Europe exceeds in awful grandeur the Northern Ocean breaking on the rocks of St Abb's Head and Fast Castle. You are attracted by the blue and silvery light which swims over that lovely lake; not a breath disturbs its sweet expanse; not a dimple breaks its blue serene; pictured in the glassy mirror, the mountains, the villages, the woods of its overhanging banks are given again with more than the freshness of nature; every headland and cliff on its broken amphitheatre of mountains is clothed with wood; the vine and the olive are sheltered in every nook; white and glittering villages rise in "gay theatric pride" up the almost precipitous slopes, while innumerable churches on every projecting point tell that it is the blessings of Christianity which have peopled the mountain-sides with happy flocks; and bless the God of nature which gave to the world the surpassing beauty of the Lago Lugano.

* We are not singular in this opinion. "Unquestionably," says Saussure, "the two hours I spent on the summit of the Craon, on two different occasions, were the most delicious of my life."—*Voyages aux Alpes*.

Embark in that light skiff: the sea is smooth, not a breath disturbs its glassy surface, the marine depths may almost be descried beneath its pellucid waves. The sun is setting in the west; the sky is illuminated by a glow of almost insufferable brightness; every sail in the bay is tinged by the ruddy glow; the massy piles of the city in front are resplendent in his setting beams. A bold mountain range, the shades of whose ravines are marked by a purple hue, forms the frame of one side of the picture; the scorched and blackened summit of Vesuvius rises in solitary grandeur in the centre; the wooded heights of Camaldoli, the distant peaks of Ischia, close it on the other side. Is this the most charming scene in Europe?—and has the Bay of Naples carried the palm over all other capitals in the exquisite beauty of its situation? Enter yonder narrow strait, which winds between the rival continents of Europe and Asia, here all but touching each other. The white battlements of castles seem to shut it in like an inland lake on every side, during the long passage. But, lo! the strait opens; an inland sea appears; innumerable light caïques are seen traversing the blue waves in every direction; and the morning sun shines on the domes and mosques of Constantinople. Embowered in foliage, surmounted by cypresses, interlaced with gardens, the piles of the old city of palaces, on the left, descend to the extremity of the Seraglio Point; in the centre, a crowd of minarets, domes, and spires rise in glittering splendour out of a richly wooded slope; while in the extreme distance, a wide opening and a distant forest of shipping bespeak the entrance of the Golden Horn, the finest harbour in the world. The bay teems with life, thousands of light barks traverse it on every side, the distant shores are all enlivened with elegant buildings intermingled with foliage, even the very air teems with life, and incessant flocks of birds bespeak the great artery of communication between the northern and southern hemispheres.

Evening has spread its russet mantle, and the light of day has long ceased in the depths of yonder Alpine valley. Through overhanging woods, interspersed with detached blocks of rock, meadows shaven with more than a gardener's care, and wooden cottages bespeaking the comfort and neat-

ness of the inhabitants, a mountain torrent brawls over its rocky bed ; the sound of labour, the noise of the day has ceased ; the summit of the sky is of darkest blue ; the evening star is beginning to shine in the firmament, but the tops of the stupendous precipices which shut in the valley on either side are still illuminated by the ruddy glow ; and, far above all, the pure summit of the Jungfrauhorn is resplendent with rosy light.

It is the hour of noon ; the heat, the rare heat of a summer day has spread a languor over the face of Nature ; its numerous wooded islands are clearly reflected in that lovely lake ; each rock, each headland, each drooping birch is pictured in the expanse beneath ; the rowers rest on their oars, as if fearful to break the glassy surface ; the yellow corn-fields at the foot of the mountains, the autumnal tints of the woods above, the gray faces of rock on their shaggy sides, shine again in the watery mirror ; you can reach with an oar the picture of the hills on either side of the valley ; you can touch with your hand the purple summit of the mountains :—

“ Each weather-tinted rock and tower,
Each drooping tree, each fairy flower,
So pure, so fair the mirror gave,
As if there lay beneath the wave,
Secure from trouble, toil, and care,
A world than earthly world more fair.”

Whoever has seen that magical scene at such a moment will deem that the travelled Clarke has not overstated its beauty when he said that a Swedish lake “excelled the lake of Locarno in Italy, and *almost rivalled* Loch Lomond in Scotland.”

Has England no equal beauties to exhibit ? Enter that remnant of Sherwood which her noble Peers still preserve with religious care in the shades of Walbeck ; you there behold the genuine magnificence of the Saxon forest. With lofty growth, but not disproportioned stems, the oaks rise in surpassing grandeur ; the lapse of centuries has added to their strength, but not induced their decay ; ferns in wild luxuriance rise at their feet ; here and there an old gnarled trunk with a few branches on its top may have witnessed the chivalry of Richard and the archers of Robin Hood ; but in general a dark fresh green prevails over the scene, bespeak-

ing the glowing health and luxuriance of middle age, and occasionally the antlers of a deer appear—the fitting accompaniments of the sylvan scene. Can France exhibit nothing to be placed in comparison? Ascend that wild road which leads over black and desolate piles of rock to a wilderness of crags; high as you mount, with faltering step, still higher cliffs arise on every side; the path, now shut in by enormous rocks, now turning on the dizzy edge of a projecting angle, exhibits alternately the walls of a gloomy prison or the distant vistas of a savage wilderness. But stop! an impassable barrier arises; a precipice, two thousand feet in height, closes in the upper extremity of the valley, the glitter of snow is seen on its summit, the spray of cataracts dashes down its sides; the black face of the rock is furrowed by innumerable waterfalls; a continued roar is heard as you advance; a cleft in the rocks above exhibits the Breach of Roland, and marks the frontier of rival kingdoms; the sublimity of the Pyrenees is concentrated in the circle of Gabarnie. Enter yonder Gothic gateway that leads between overhanging precipices to the stately forests of the Grande Chartreuse in Dauphiny; vast trees overshadow the road; a sounding torrent roars in its rocky channel far beneath; through the openings of their thick branches are to be seen vast piles of rock, which rise to a prodigious height on either side; their white cliffs glitter in the sun; bars of pine forest intersect their breasts; their splintered pinnacles are clear defined on the dark blue vault; but on every summit the cross is to be seen; devotion has spread its sway over the wilderness; a feeling of religious awe impresses you as you advance.

“Præsentio rem conspicimus Deum
Fera per juga clivosque præruptos,
Sonantes inter aquas nemorumque noctem.”

Has Germany no scene of equal interest to exhibit? Embark in that little bark which lies moored on the edge of a verdant close-shaven meadow, beneath luxuriant beech-trees at the foot of the rocky barrier of the König See in the territory of Salzburg. The sun is yet high in the heavens; you may reach the farther extremity of the lake, far up in the recesses of the mountains, before the shades of night have fallen. Its extent at first seems little larger than what

would suit a fairy dell ; but let us double that awful cliff that rises in impassable grandeur from the water's edge to the height of three thousand feet. What a prospect opens to the sight ! Right before you lies the glorious expanse of waters, broad, still, and deep, but appearing as nothing amidst the stupendous mountains by which it is environed ; its farther extremity is lost in the obscurity which their awful shades cast around the scene ; ten thousand feet of rock, or forest, or snow rise from the level surface to their pure and glittering summits ; dark forests of pine clothe every ravine on their precipitous flanks ; bold precipitous fronts, with bare sides of immeasurable elevation, start forth into the water, and encircle at their feet little green meadows intersected with wood, and accessible only by water, where industrious man has fixed his abode. A cloudless declining sun, as you advance, throws a delicious lustre, intermingled with shadow, over the scene ; autumn has spread its richest colours over the woods which clothe the mountain-sides ; every headland is tinted with yellow, every forest is intermingled with fire ; the unruffled surface of the lake seems almost to burn with the insufferable glow.

Switzerland ! Switzerland ! is your grandeur then surpassed by the rival beauties of the Tyrolese or Styrian Alps ? Trust yourself to that frail skiff, and approach the foaming abyss where the Rhine is precipitated with matchless violence down the cliffs of Schaffhausen. St Paul's would in an instant be swept away by its fury. The waters which have passed the descent are tossed in wild and seemingly frantic agitation, even at a great distance ; your bark trembles and cracks as it approaches the awful gulf ; down, down comes the mighty mass of waters, shaking the earth with its fall, rending the air with its spray ; thunder would not be heard at its foot, embattled nations would be scattered by its force. Is this the sublimest scene in Europe, and has water borne away the palm from fire in the production of sublimity ? Ascend at nightfall that black and scorched mountain, down whose sides the streams of recent lava have furrowed far and deep into the cultivation of man ; you toil, you pant, as, amidst the stillness of a Neapolitan night, you painfully ascend the scorched and blackened steep. But hark ! the mountain shakes, a rending sound succeeds, a report like

the discharge of a thousand cannon is heard, and instantly the dark vault of heaven is filled with innumerable stars, and as you pause at the awful spectacle, a sharp rattle on all sides announces the fall of burning projectiles for miles around. Still advance, if your courage does not fail, and you may reach the summit of the steep ascent ere another explosion. Watch! watch! the dark cone in the centre of the rugged summit, on whose sides the red embers are still glowing, begins to shake; it heaves—it bursts. A frightful volume of smoke is driven forth into heaven; right upwards does the fiery discharge spread from the gaping furnace; the Pyramids would be blown into the air by its violence. A thousand rockets are bursting in the heavens—perfect stillness for a few seconds succeeds, and then on all sides is heard the roar of the falling stones over the dark and desolate slopes of the mountain.*

The reader will probably think we have revelled long enough in the glowing recollections of earlier years; but in truth these illustrations, multifarious and rhapsodical as they may appear, are not foreign to this argument. They show both the dignity and grandeur of the art which has such magnificent materials at its command; and the elevated conceptions, as well as persevering industry, essential to success in its pursuits. To make a great, a truly great painter, requires as powerful and original a mind as to make a great statesman, or poet, or orator. It requires the ardent disposition, the *feu sacré*, which, early fixing its desire on great achievement, disregards all labour, endures all fatigue in its prosecution: the eye of genius, which can discern the truly grand and beautiful in all things; the industrious hand which can undergo the years of toil requisite to the skilful management of the pencil, and the combining mind which can unite a variety of separate objects in the production of one uniform emotion. The man who can do these things in their full perfection must have a mind, the rival of the greatest of his age. Michael Angelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Rubens, or Titian would have been illustrious in any line of life. Mr Pitt or Mr Burke, if greatness had in

* The travelled reader will easily recognise in the preceding descriptions many scenes, only accessible during the buoyancy of youth and health, and the recollection of which, like the music of former days, is now after the lapse of twenty years as fresh and vivid in the author's recollection as if they had just been visited.

Britain been accessible by such a channel, would have made magnificent painters. Milton spoke historical pictures in the *Paradise Lost* : Thomson breathed landscape beauty in the *Seasons* : Scott burned with the soul of painting in his poetry and his prose : Byron dipped his pen in its brightest colours, in his *Oriental Fictions* : Chateaubriand poured forth all its lustre in his resplendent descriptions. Strange, that when prose and poetry, in the hands of such masters, should all but put the colours on the canvass, Painting itself, in the midst of such mighty allies, should still slumber on in comparative mediocrity.

To these remarks, two illustrious exceptions exist in Martin and Danby. The authors of the *Deluge* and of the *Valley of the Upas-Tree* may well claim, even from the most enthusiastic admirer of nature, the most fervent worshipper of poetic genius, the tribute of unqualified admiration for the grandeur of the conceptions which they have brought forth. Nor is detail wanting : these great works are finished with admirable minuteness, while a gloomy grandeur breathes over the whole composition. But the imagination of these eminent men, especially Martin, grows wild and runs riot in its own luxuriance. In the surpassing magnificence of his Asiatic palaces, the countless myriads of his crowds, the gorgeous splendour of his feasts, is developed rather the boundless power of a magician, than the faithful chronicler of existing things. We feel at once that such scenes never existed : and the *Fables of Ariosto* or *Spencer* will never rival in their influence with the great bulk of mankind the simple tales in which *Burns* and *Scott* and *Shakspeare* have drawn characters and awakened emotions familiar and common to all mankind.

The world in general is far from being aware of the excessive labour, as well as exalted imagination, requisite to form a great painter. Ten years' incessant drawing from nature, and diligent application, are requisite to gain a tolerable command of the pencil : ten years more to learn the magic of colouring, and unweave the varied hues of nature's robe. The labour requisite to master these objects with consummate skill is not less than is required to form a leader in civil life or warlike achievement ; to form a *Peel*, an *Eldon*, or a *Wellington*. It is in some degree from not

being aware of the long years of preparation requisite for success in this, as in every other liberal and difficult art, that we see such numbers who never get beyond mediocrity ; and such multitudes of paintings which pass muster tolerably well with the world in general, and yet bear the same comparison to the works of the great masters which the skill of an ensign or cornet in wheeling his company or squadron, does to the vast combinations of Hannibal or Napoleon, by which the destinies of the world were determined.

This language will pass with many as exaggerated or surcharged ; we are persuaded it will not do so with any who have themselves practised, even in the slightest degree, or studied in the works of others, this captivating art. But to its successful cultivation it is indispensable that not merely the aim of the artists, but the taste of the public should be formed on an elevated standard ; and it is here that the great difference between painting and the sister arts of poetry, oratory, and history consists, and that the chief difficulty which obstructs its successful cultivation in this country is to be found. In all these arts the taste of all persons of education is early fixed, and their ideas of perfection raised to the very highest standard by the study of the classical remains or the immortal works of modern genius. In poetry every man's soul who has received a good education is warmed in infancy by Virgil and Homer ; in maturer years by Tasso, Racine, and Milton. In history, the pictured page of Livy, the condensed energy of Sallust, the instructive wisdom of Thucydides, the lucid narrative of Xenophon, the caustic depth of Tacitus, form every mind before the glowing pages of Gibbon, the eloquent descriptions of Robertson, or the profound views of Hume become the subject of study. Sophocles, Euripides, and Corneille in tragedy, Shakspeare and Schiller in the romantic drama, Molière and Terence in comedy, are familiar to every one who has the slightest pretensions to mental cultivation. But where are the materials for a similar early tuition to be found in painting or sculpture ? Who is to place the works of Raphael, Titian, and Velasquez in every schoolboy's hands, to form the mind by the study of things that are excellent to a correct appreciation of modern art ? Yet in

what department are study and experience, and a familiarity with good models, and the advantages of early tuition, so conspicuous as in the formation of taste? And is there one in a thousand of our educated classes who, when he enters upon the business of life, or is intrusted with the patronage of wealth, has the slightest acquaintance with an art, a tolerable familiarity with which can be acquired only by years of travel or diligent application?

It is here that the vast, the incalculable advantage of foreign study consists. In Italy, models of art are so common, that every one's taste is in some degree formed on the habitual study of excellence. Mediocrity will not for an instant be tolerated; and hence, in a great degree, the extinction of modern art; the national wealth is not adequate to the purchase of old and new pictures; and the ancient models drive all younger competitors out of the field. Rich as this country is in great models of art, it is not rich to any useful purpose; and the great collections in the country seats of our nobility are so scattered, or so hedged in with powdered lacqueys or cringing domestics expecting half-a-crown at every turn, that for all practical purposes of forming the public taste they do not exist. Till this grand impediment is removed, it is utterly impossible that a great school of painting can arise amongst us, because the public, whether the buyers or criticisers of pictures, will never be brought to distinguish a good picture from a bad one. Let every possible facility, therefore, be given to the formation of public exhibitions of old masters, to which admission, at a trifling cost, may at all times be had. The National Gallery, in London, is a fair beginning; the Royal Institution, at Edinburgh, a creditable attempt; but every city of note in the empire must have similar establishments before anything like a due formation of the public taste can be effected.

In all such institutions, the works of the old masters and the modern paintings should be exhibited TOGETHER; the latter should on no account be removed to make way for the former. Our landscape painters should be forced to stand the competition with Hobbema, Ruysdael, and Claude; our sea painters with Vandervelde and Vernet; our historical composers with the Caracci, Domenichino, Guido, and

Albano ; our portrait painters with Titian, Velasquez,* and Vandyke. Till this is the case, the marked inferiority of modern art will never become generally felt, nor the lucrative mediocrity of modern indolence ever adequately censured. Our painters must, in common estimation and to the ordinary observer, stand the competition which our poets, orators, and historians do with the great masters of ancient days in their several departments, or they will never equal the national genius in these rival arts. We are well aware that at present the merit of these old models would be little felt, that few persons would resort to them, and that the modern artists would run away with all the admiration, because they painted living people or known scenes. But by degrees a better spirit would arise, and many who went to see the portrait of a cousin or a daughter, or wonder at the staring likeness of a grandmother or a hussar, would come away with a new view of enjoyment opened in their minds, and with their minds opened to the appreciation of a Raphael or a Correggio.

This is a department in which munificent bequests might be of certain and incalculable advantage. We daily hear of vast fortunes, two and three hundred thousand pounds, left to form colleges or endow hospitals, but never of one to bestow the durable blessing on the country of a great public gallery of pictures or statues. Yet the utility of the former is often doubtful or disputed, whereas that of the latter is certain and permanent. Nothing but refinement and enjoyment, the cultivation of mind, and the improvement of manners, could result from such establishments for opening refined and elevating sources of pleasure to the people. £200,000 left to a national institution would yield £8000 a-year FOR EVER, for the purchase of pictures. Such an income, steadily and faithfully applied, would in a few generations produce the noblest gallery to the north of the Alps. It would stamp immortality on the munificent testator, and do more than all the insulated efforts of individuals to refine and purify the public taste. Moral blessings

* There are not many portraits by Velasquez in this country ; but the merits of that great painter may be fully appreciated from the treatise of my valued friend Mr Stirling of Keir, on Spanish painters—a work which unites the learning and taste of Lanzi and Vasari, to a force and originality of thought superior to either.

of no light character would flow from such an institution ; it is a proof how far we are behind in real civilisation, amidst all our boasting of the march of intellect, that no such bequest has hitherto been made.

It is high time that, by this or some other means, the stigma of mediocrity which has so long lain on British art should be removed. We are in that stage of national existence when excellence in the fine arts might naturally be expected, in which Athens raised the matchless portico of the Parthenon, and Rome the stately dome of the Pantheon, and modern Italy gave birth to Raphael and Domenichino. Unless something is done now, and that, too, speedily, we shall arrive at the stage of the corruption of taste before we have passed through its excellence ; as Diderot said of the Russians, we shall be rotten before we are ripe. The vast growth of opulence, the taste for gorgeous display and rich decoration, the passion for theatric spectacles, the turn of our literature and manners, all mark too clearly the approach of the corrupted era of national feeling. Now, then, is the time, before it has yet arrived, and the vigour of growing civilisation is not extinguished, to give it a refined and classic direction, and afford some ground for our boasted refinement, by producing and encouraging works in the fine arts worthy of being placed beside the productions of ages who, from being trained to emulation with greater things, are less loud in the praise of their own proficiency, and therefore have acquired the undying admiration of subsequent ages.

THE TYROL

[BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, SEPT. 1819]

It is a common observation, that the character of a people is in a great measure influenced by their local situation, and the nature of the scenery in which they are placed ; and it is impossible to visit the Tyrol without being convinced of the truth of the remark. The entrance of the mountain region is marked by as great a diversity in the aspect and manners of the population as in the external objects with which they are surrounded ; nor is the transition from the level plain of Lombardy to the rugged precipices of the Alps greater than from the squalid crouching appearance of the Italian peasant to the martial air of the free-born mountaineer.

This transition is so remarkable that it attracts the attention of the most superficial observer. In travelling over the states of the north of Italy, he meets everywhere with the symptoms of poverty, meanness, and depression. The beautiful slopes which descend from the Alps, clothed with all that is beautiful or luxuriant in nature, are inhabited for the most part by an indigent and squalid population, among whom you seek in vain for any share of that bounty with which Providence has blessed their country. The rich plains of Lombardy are cultivated by a peasantry whose condition is hardly superior to that of the Irish cottager ; and while the effeminate proprietors of the soil waste their days in inglorious indolence at Milan and Verona, their unfortunate tenantry are exposed to the merciless rapacity of bailiffs and stewards, intent only upon augmenting the fortunes of their absent superiors. In the town the symptoms of general distress are, if possible, still more apparent.

While the opera and the Corso are crowded with splendid equipages, the lower classes of the people are involved in hopeless indigence :—The churches and public streets are crowded with beggars, whose wretched appearance marks but too truly the reality of the distress of which they complain ; while their abject and crouching manner indicates the political degradation to which they have so long been subjected. At Venice in particular, the total stagnation of employment, and the misery of the people, strikes a stranger the more forcibly from the contrast which they afford to the unrivalled splendour of her edifices, and the glorious recollections with which her history is filled. As he admires the gorgeous magnificence of the piazza St Marco, or winds through the noble palaces that still rise with undecaying beauty from the waters of the Adriatic, he no longer wonders at the astonishment with which the stern crusaders of the north gazed at her marble piles, and feels the rapture of the Roman emperor, when he approached “ where Venice sat in state throned on her hundred isles ;” but in the mean and pusillanimous race by which they are now inhabited, he looks in vain for the descendants of those great men who leapt from their galleys on the towers of Constantinople, and stood forth as the bulwark of Christendom against the Ottoman power ; and still less, when he surveys the miserable population with which he is surrounded, can he go back in imagination to those days of liberty and valour when

“ Venice once was dear,
The pleasant place of all festivity,
The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy.”

From such scenes of national distress, and from the melancholy spectacle of despotic power ruling in the abode of ancient freedom, it is with delight that the traveller enters the fastnesses of the Alps, where liberty has imprinted itself in indelible characters on the character and manners of the people. In every part of the Tyrol, the bold and martial air of the peasantry, their athletic form and fearless eye, bespeak the freedom and independence which they have enjoyed. In most instances the people go armed ; and during the summer and autumn they wear a musket hung over their shoulders, or some other offensive weapon. Universally they possess weapons of war, and are trained early

to the use of them, both by the expeditions in search of game, of which they are passionately fond—and by the annual duty of serving in the trained bands, to which every man capable of bearing arms is, without exception, subjected. It was in consequence of this circumstance, in a great measure, that they were able to make so vigorous a resistance, with so little preparation, to the French invasion ; and it is to the same cause that is chiefly to be ascribed that intrepid and martial air by which they are distinguished from almost every other peasantry in Europe.

Their *dress* is singularly calculated to add to this impression. That of the men consists, for the most part, of a broad-brimmed hat, ornamented by a feather ; a jacket tight to the shape, with a broad girdle, richly ornamented, fastened in front by a large buckle of costly workmanship ; black leather breeches and gaiters, supported over the shoulders by two broad bands, generally of scarlet or blue, which are joined in front by a cross belt of the same colour. They frequently wear pistols in their girdle, and have either a rifle or cloak slung over their shoulders. The colours of the dresses vary in the different parts of the country, as they do in the cantons of Switzerland ; but they are always brilliant, and ornamented, particularly round the breast, with a degree of richness which appears extraordinary in the labouring classes of the community. Their girdles and clasps, with the other more costly parts of their clothing, are handed down from generation to generation, and worn, on Sundays and festivals, with scrupulous care, by the great-grandsons of those by whom they were originally purchased.

The dress of the women is grotesque and singular in the extreme. Generally speaking, the waists are long, and the petticoats exceedingly short ; and the colours of their clothes are as bright and various as those of the men. To persons habituated, however, to the easy and flowing attire of our own countrywomen, the form and style of this dress appears particularly unbecoming ; nor can we altogether divest ourselves of those ideas of ridicule which we are accustomed to attach to such antiquated forms, both on the stage and in the pictures of the last generation. Among the peasant girls you often meet with much beauty ; but, for the most part, the women of the Tyrol are not nearly so striking as

the men ; an observation which seems applicable to most mountainous countries, and to none more than to Wales and the West Highlands of Scotland.

It is of more importance to observe that the Tyrolese peasantry are everywhere courteous and pleasing in their demeanour, both towards strangers and their own countrymen. In this respect, their manners have sometimes been misrepresented. If a traveller addresses them in the style of insolence or reproach, which is generally used towards the lower orders in France or Italy, he will in all probability meet with a repulse ; and if the insult is carried farther, he may, perhaps, have cause permanently to repent the indiscretion of his language. For the Tyrolese are a free people ; and though subject to a despotic government, their own state preserves its liberty as entire as if it acknowledged no superior to its own authority. The peasantry, too, are of a keen and enthusiastic temper ; grateful to the last degree for kindness or condescension, but feelingly alive on the other hand to anything like contempt or derision in the manner of their superiors. Dwelling, too, in a country where all are equal, and where few noble families or great proprietors are to be found, they are little accustomed to brook insults of any kind, or to submit to language from strangers which they would not tolerate from their own countrymen. A similar temper of mind may be observed among the Scotch Highlanders ; it has been noticed in the mountains of Nepaul and Cabul, and has long characterised the Arabian tribes ; and indeed it belongs generally to all classes of the people in those situations where the debasing effects of the progress of wealth and the division of labour have not been felt, and where, from whatever causes, the individuals in the lower ranks of life are called into active and strenuous exertion, and compelled to act for themselves in the conduct of life.

If a stranger, however, behaves towards the Tyrolese peasantry with the ordinary courtesy with which an Englishman is accustomed to address the people of his own country, there is no part of the world in which he will meet with a more cordial reception, or where he will find a more affectionate or grateful return for the smallest acts of kindness. Among these untutored people, the gratitude for any

good deed on the part of their superiors is not, as in more civilised states, the result of any habitual awe for their rank, or of any selfish consideration of the advantage to be derived from cultivating their good-will: it is the spontaneous effusion of benevolent feeling, of feeling springing from the uncorrupted dictates of their hearts, and enhanced by the feudal attachment with which they naturally are inclined to regard those in a higher rank than themselves. Though the Tyrolese are entirely free, and though the Emperor possesses but a nominal sovereignty over them, yet the warm feelings of feudal fidelity have nowhere maintained their place more inviolate than among the mountains; and this feeling of feudal respect and affection is extended by them to the higher classes, whenever they behave towards them with anything like kindness or gentleness of manners. It has arisen from the peculiar situation of their country, in which there are very few of the higher orders, where the peasantry possess almost the entire land of which it consists, and where, at the same time, the bonds of feudal attachment have been preserved with scrupulous care, for political reasons, by their government. Thus the peasantry have come to unite the independence and pride of republican states with the devoted and romantic fidelity to their sovereign which characterises the inhabitants of monarchical realms. Like the peasantry of Switzerland, they regard themselves as composing the state, and would disdain to crouch before any other power. But they unite with this other and not less honourable qualities. Like the Highlanders of Scotland, they are actuated by the warmest and most enthusiastic loyalty towards their sovereign, and like them they have not scrupled on many occasions to expose their lives and fortunes in a doubtful and often hopeless struggle in his cause. From these causes has arisen that singular mixture of loyalty and independence, of stubbornness and courtesy, of republican pride and chivalrous fidelity, by which their character is distinguished from that of every other people in Europe.

Honesty may be regarded as a leading feature in the character of the Tyrolese, as indeed it is of all the German people. In no situation and under no circumstance is a stranger in danger of being deceived by them. They will,

in many instances, sacrifice their own interests rather than betray what they consider as so sacred a duty as that of preserving inviolate their faith with foreigners. In this respect their conduct affords a very striking contrast to the conduct of the French and Italians, whose rapacity and meanness have long been observed and commented on by every traveller. Yet, amidst all our indignation at that character, it may well be doubted, whether it does not arise naturally and inevitably from the system of government to which they have had the misfortune to be subjected. Honesty is a virtue practised and esteemed among men who have a character to support, and who feel their own importance in the scale of society. Generally it will be found to prevail in proportion to the weight which is attached to individual character; that is, to the freedom which the people enjoy. Cheating, on the other hand, is the usual and obvious resource of slaves, of men who have never been taught to respect themselves, and whose personal qualities are entirely overlooked by the higher orders of the state. If England and Switzerland and the Tyrol had been subjected by any train of unfortunate events to the same despotism which has degraded the character of the lower orders in France and Italy, they would probably have had as little reason as their more servile neighbours to have prided themselves on the honesty and integrity of their national character.

Perhaps the most remarkable feature in the character of the Tyrolese, is their uniform PIETY, a feeling which is nowhere so universally diffused as among their sequestered valleys. The most cursory view of the country is sufficient to demonstrate the strong hold which religion has taken of the minds of the peasantry. Chapels are built almost at every half mile on the principal roads, in which the passenger may perform his devotions, or which may awaken the thoughtless mind to a recollection of its religious duties. The rude efforts of art have there been exerted to portray the leading events in our Saviour's life; and innumerable figures carved in wood, attest, in every part of the country, both the barbarous taste of the people, and the fervour of their religious impressions. Even in the higher parts of the mountains, where hardly any vestiges of human cultivation

are to be found, in the depth of untrodden forests, or on the summit of seemingly inaccessible cliffs, the symbols of devotion are to be found, and the cross rises everywhere amidst the wilderness, as if to mark the triumph of Christianity over the greatest obstacles of nature. Nor is it only in solitudes or deserts that these insignia of their devotion are to be found. In the valleys and in the cities it still preserves its ancient sway over the people. On the exterior of most houses the legend of some favourite saint, or the sufferings of some popular martyr, are to be found ; and the poor inhabitant thinks himself secure from the greater evils of life under the guardianship of their heavenly aid. In every valley numerous spires are to be seen rising amidst the beauty of the surrounding scene, and reminding the traveller of the piety of its simple inhabitants. On Sunday the *whole people* flock to church in their neatest and gayest attire ; and so great is the number who thus frequent these places of worship, that it is not unfrequent to see the peasants kneeling on the turf in the churchyard while mass is performed, from being unable to find a place within its walls. Regularly in the evening, prayers are read in every family ; and the traveller who passes through the villages at the hour of twilight, often sees through the latticed windows the young and the old kneeling together round their humble fire, or is warned of his approach to human habitation by hearing their evening hymns stealing through the silence and solitude of the forest.

Nor is their devotion confined to acts of external homage, or the observance of an unmeaning ceremony. Debased as their religion is by the absurdities and errors of the Catholic form of worship, and mixed up as it has become with innumerable legends and visionary tales, it yet preserves enough of the pure spirit of its divine origin, to influence, in a great degree, the conduct of their private lives. The Tyrolese have not yet learned that immorality in private life may be pardoned by the observance of certain ceremonies, or that the profession of faith purchases a dispensation from the rules of obedience. These, the natural and the usual attendants of the Catholic faith in richer states, have not reached their poor and sequestered valleys. The purchase of absolution by money is there almost unknown. In no

part of the world are the domestic or conjugal duties more strictly or faithfully observed ; and in none do the parish priests exercise a stricter or more conscientious control over the conduct of their flock. Their influence is not weakened, as in a more advanced state of society, by a discordance of religious tenets ; nor is the consideration due to this sacred function lost in the homage paid to rank, or opulence, or power. Placed in the midst of a people who acknowledge no superiors, and who live almost universally from the produce of their little domains, and strangers alike to the arts of luxury and the seductions of fashion, the parish priest is equally removed from temptation himself, and relieved from guarding against the great sources of wickedness in others. He is at once the priest and the judge of his parish ; the infallible criterion in matters of faith, and the umpire in the occasional disputes which happen among them. Hence has arisen that remarkable veneration for their spiritual guides by which the peasantry are distinguished ; and it is to this cause that we are to ascribe the singular fact that their priests were their principal leaders in the war with France ; and that while their nobles almost universally held back, the people followed with alacrity the call of their pastors, to take up arms in support of the Austrian cause.

In one great virtue, the peasants in this country (in common, it must be owned, with most Catholic states) are particularly worthy of imitation. The virtue of *charity*, which is too much overlooked in many Protestant kingdoms, but which the Catholic religion so uniformly and sedulously enjoins, is there practised to the greatest degree, and by all classes of the people. Perhaps there are few countries in which, owing to the absence of manufactures and great towns, poverty appears so rarely, or in which the great body of the people live so universally in a state of comfort. Yet, whenever wretchedness does appear, it meets with immediate and effectual relief. Nor is their charity confined to actual mendicants, but extends to all whom accident or misfortune has involved in casual distress. Each valley supports its own poor ; and the little store of every cottage, like the meal of the Irish cottager, is always open to any one who really requires its assistance. This benevolent disposition springs, no doubt, in a great measure from the simple state in which

society exists among these remote districts ; but it is to be ascribed not less to the efforts of the clergy, who incessantly enjoin this great Christian duty, and point it out as the chief means of atoning for past transgressions. Much as we may lament the errors of the Catholic, and clearly as we may see its tendency (at least in its more corrupt forms) to nourish private immorality, and extinguish civil liberty, it is yet impossible to deny, that in the great duty of Christian charity, which it invariably enjoins, it has atoned for a multitude of sins ; and to suspect that amidst the austerity and severity of the presbyterian discipline, we have too much lost sight of the charity of the gospel ; and that with us a pretended indignation for the vices which involve so many of the poor in distress, too often serves as a pretext for refusing to misery that relief to which, from whatever cause it has arisen, our Saviour tells us that it is entitled.

There is something singularly delightful in the sway which religion thus maintains in these savage and sequestered regions. In ancient times, we are informed, these mountains were inhabited by the Rhaetians, the fiercest and most barbarous of the tribes who dwelt in the fastnesses of the mountains, and of whose savage manners Livy has given so striking an account in his description of Hannibal's Passage of the Alps. Many Roman legions were impeded in their progress, or thinned of their numbers, by these cruel barbarians ; and even after they were reduced to subjection by the expedition of Drusus, it was still esteemed a service of the utmost danger to leave the high road, or explore the remote recesses of the country. Hence the singular fact, almost incredible in modern times, that even in the days of Pliny, several hundred years after the first passage of these mountains by the Roman troops, the sources of both the Rhone and the Iser were unknown, and that the naturalist of Rome was content to state, a century after the establishment of a Roman station at Sion, that the Rhone took its rise "in the most hidden parts of the earth, in the region of perpetual night, amidst forests for ever inaccessible to human approach." Hence it is, too, that almost all the inscriptions on the votive offerings which have been discovered in the ruins of the temple of *Jupiter Penninus*, at the summit of the Great St Bernard, and many of which come

down to a late period in the history of the empire, speak of the gratitude of the passengers for having escaped the extraordinary *perils* of the journey. The Roman authors always speak of the Alps with expressions of dismay and horror, as the scenes only of winter and desolation, and as the abodes of barbarous tribes. “*Nives cœlo prope immistæ, tecta informia imposita rupibus, pecora jumentaque torrida frigore, homines intonsi et inculti, animalia inanimaque omnia rigentia gelu, cetera visu quam dictu fœdiora terrorem renovarunt.*”* No attempt, accordingly, appears to have been made by any of the Romans, in later times, to explore the remoter recesses of the mountains now so familiar to every traveller; but while the Emperors constructed magnificent highways across their summits to connect Italy with the northern provinces of the empire, they suffered the valleys on either side to remain in their pristine state of barbarism, and hastened into remoter districts to spread that cultivation of which the Alps, with their savage inhabitants, seemed to them incapable.

What is it, then, which has wrought so wonderful a change in the manners, the habits, and the condition of the inhabitants of these desolate regions? What is it which has spread cultivation through wastes deemed in ancient times inaccessible to human improvement, and humanised the manners of a people remarkable only, under the Roman sway, for the ferocity and barbarism of their institutions? From what cause has it happened that those savage mountaineers, who resisted all the arts of civilisation by which the Romans established their sway over mankind, and continued even to the overthrow of the empire impervious to all the efforts of ancient improvement, should, in later times, have so entirely changed their character, and have appeared, even from the first dawn of modern civilisation, mild and humane in their character and manners? From what but from the influence of RELIGION—of that religion which calmed the savage feelings of the human mind, and spread its beneficial influence among the remotest habitations of men; and which prompted its disciples to leave the luxuries

* “*Snows mingling with the clouds, shapeless cottages perched on the rocks; cattle, beasts of burden, and men alike uncouth and unshorn; animals and inanimate objects alike stiff with frost, and more frightful than can be described, spread universal alarm.*”—LIVY, lib. 21.

and comforts of southern climates, to diffuse knowledge and humanity through inhospitable realms, and extend, even amidst the regions of winter and desolation, the light and the blessings of a spiritual faith.

Universally it has been observed throughout the whole extent of the Alps, that the earliest vestiges of civilisation, and the first traces of order and industry which appeared after the overthrow of the Roman empire, were to be found in the immediate neighbourhood of the religious establishments; and it is to the unceasing efforts of the clergy during the centuries of barbarism which followed that event, that the judicious historian of Switzerland ascribes the early civilisation and humane disposition of the Helvetic tribes.* Placed as we are at a distance from the time when this great change was effected, and accustomed to manners in which its influence has long ago been established, we can hardly conceive the difficulties with which the earlier professors of our faith had to struggle in subduing the cruel propensities, and calming the revengeful passions, that subsisted among the barbarous tribes who had conquered Europe; nor would we, perhaps, be inclined to credit the accounts of the heroic sacrifices which were then made by numbers of great and good men, who devoted themselves to the conversion of the Alpine tribes, did not their institutions remain to this day as a monument of their virtue; and did we not still see a number of benevolent men, who seclude themselves from the world and dwell in the regions of perpetual snow, in the hope of rescuing a few individuals from a miserable death. When the traveller on the summit of the St Bernard reads the warm and touching expressions of gratitude with which the Roman travellers recorded in the temple of Jupiter their gratitude for having escaped the dangers of the pass, even in the days of Adrian and the Antonines, and reflects on the perfect safety with which he can now traverse the remotest recesses of the Alps, he will think with gratitude of the religion by which this wonderful change has been effected, and with veneration of the Saint whose name has for a thousand years been affixed to the pass where his influence first reclaimed the people from their barbarous life; and in crossing the defile of Mount

* *Planta*, vol. i. p. 17, &c.

Brenner, where the abbey of Wilten first offered an asylum to the pilgrim, he will feel, with a late eloquent and amiable writer, how fortunate it is "that religion has penetrated these fastnesses impervious to human power, and spread her influence over solitudes where human laws are of no avail; that where precaution is impossible, and resistance useless, she spreads her invisible ægis over the traveller, and conducts him secure under her protection through all the dangers of his way. When, in such situations, he reflects upon his security, and recollects that these mountains, so savage and so well adapted to the purposes of murderers and banditti, have not, in the memory of man, been stained with human blood, he ought to do justice to the cause, and gratefully acknowledge the beneficent influence of religion. Impressed with these reflections, he will behold with indulgence, perhaps even with interest, the crosses which frequently mark the brow of a precipice, and the little chapels hollowed out of the rock where the road is narrowed; he will consider them as so many pledges of security, and rest assured, that, as long as the pious mountaineer continues to adore the 'Good Shepherd,' and to beg the prayer of the 'afflicted Mother,' he will never cease to befriend the traveller, nor to discharge the duties of hospitality."*

It must be admitted, at the same time, that the Tyrolese are in the greatest degree superstitious, and that their devotion, warm and enthusiastic as it is, is frequently misplaced in the object of its worship. There is probably no country in which the belief in supernatural powers, in the gift of prophecy to particular individuals, and the agency of spiritual beings in human affairs, is more universally established. It forms, indeed, part of their religious creed, and blends in the most singular manner with the legendary tales and romantic adventures which they have attached to the histories of their saints. But we would err most egregiously if we imagined that this superstition, with which the whole people are tinged, savours at all of a weak or timid disposition, or that it is any indication of a degraded national character. It partakes of the savage character of the scenery in which they dwell, and is ennobled by the generous sentiments which prevail among the lowest classes of the

* *Eustace*, i. 98.

people. The same men who imagine that they see the crucifix bend its head in the dusk of the evening, and who hear the rattle of arms amid the solitude of the mountains, are fearless of death when it approaches them through the agency of human power. It is a strong feeling of religion, and a disposition to see, in all the events by which they are surrounded, the marks of divine protection, which is the foundation of *their* superstition; and the more strongly they feel reliance on spiritual interposition, the less inclined are they to sink under the reverses of a temporary life.

There is a wide distinction between *superstition* and the belief in sorcery or witchcraft. The latter is the growth of weakness and credulity, and prevails most among men of a timid disposition, or among ignorant and barbarous nations. The former, though it is founded on ignorance, and yields to the experience and knowledge of mankind, yet springs from the noblest principles of our nature, and is allied to everything by which the history of our species has been dignified in former times. It will not be pretended that the Grecian states were deficient either in splendour of talents or heroism of conduct; yet superstition, in its grossest form, attached itself to all their thoughts, and influenced alike the measures of their statesmen and the dreams of their philosophers. The Roman writers placed in that very feeling which we would call superstition, the most honourable characteristic of their people, and ascribed to it the memorable series of triumphs by which the history of the republic was distinguished. “Nullâ unquam republicâ aut major aut sanctior fuit,”* says Livy; and it is to their deep sense of religion that Cicero imputes the unparalleled success with which the arms of the republic were attended.† Yet the religious feeling which was so intimately blended with the Roman character, and which guided the actions and formed the minds of the great men who adorned her history, was for the most part little else than that firm reliance on the *special* interposition of providence, which is the origin of superstition. The Saracens, during the wars which followed the introduction of the Mahometan faith, were superstitious to the highest degree; yet with how

* “No Republic was ever more powerful, or more devout.”

† *Livy*, Lib. i. *Cic. de Off.* Lib. i. c. 11.

many brilliant and glorious qualities was their character distinguished, when they triumphantly carried the Crescent of Mahomet from the snows of the Himmaleh to the shores of the Atlantic. The crusaders, even of the highest rank, believed firmly in the miracles and prophecies which were said to have accompanied the march of the Christian army; nor is it perhaps possible to find in history an example of such extraordinary consequences as followed the supposed discovery of the Holy Lance in the siege of Antioch; yet who will deny to these great men the praise of heroic enterprise and noble manners? Human nature has nowhere appeared in such glorious colours as in the *Jerusalem Delivered* of Tasso, where the firmness and constancy of the Roman patriot are blended with the courtesy of chivalrous manners, and the exalted piety of Christian faith: yet superstition formed a part of the character of all his heroes; the courage of Tancred failed when he heard the voice of Clorinda in the charmed tree; and the bravest of his comrades trembled when they entered the enchanted forest, where

“ Esce all hor de la selva un suon repente,
 Che par rimbombo di terren che treme,
 E'l mormorar degli Austri in lui si sente,
 E'l pianto d'onda, che fra scogli geme.”

Examples of this kind may teach us, that although superstition in the age and among the society in which we live is the mark of a feeble mind, yet that in less enlightened parts of the world, it is the mark only of an ardent and enthusiastic disposition, such as is the foundation of everything that is great or generous in character, or elevated and spiritual in feeling. A people, in fact, strongly impressed with religious feeling, and to whom experience has not taught the means by which Providence acts in human affairs, *must be superstitious*; for it is the universal propensity of uninstructed man to imagine that a special interposition of the Deity is necessary to accomplish the manifestation of His will, or the accomplishment of His purposes in human affairs. Nor is there anything impossible, or absurd, or inconsistent with reason, properly considered, in such a supposition. It *might* have been, that future events were to be revealed on particular occasions to mankind, as they were during the days of ancient prophecy,

and that the course of human events was to be maintained by special interpositions of divine power. Experience alone teaches us, that this is *not* the case; it alone shows, that the intentions of Providence are carried into effect through the intervention of human agents, and that the laws of the moral world work out their own accomplishment by the voluntary acts of free agents. When we see how difficult it is to make persons even of a cultivated understanding comprehend this subject even in the present age, and with all the experience which former times have furnished, we may cease to wonder at the superstition which prevails among the peasants of the Tyrol; we may believe that, situated as they are, it is the natural effusion of a pious spirit untaught by the experience of other ages; and we may discern, in the extravagancies of their legendary creed, not less than in the sublime piety of Newton, the operation of those common laws by which man is bound to his Creator.

The scenery of the Tyrol, and of the adjacent provinces of Styria and Carinthia, is singularly adapted to nourish romantic and superstitious ideas among the peasantry. In every part of the world the grandeur of mountain scenery has been found to be the prolific parent of superstition. It was the mists, and the blue lakes, and the sounding cataracts of Caledonia, which gave birth to the sublime but gloomy dreams of Ossian. The same cause has operated to a still greater degree among the Alps of the Tyrol. The sublimity of the objects with which man is there surrounded, the resistless power of the elements which he finds continually in action, the utter insignificance of his own species, when compared with the gigantic objects in which he is placed, conspire to produce that distrust of himself, and that disposition to cling to higher powers, which is the foundation of superstitious feeling. In cities and in plains, the labour of man effaces in a certain degree these impressions; the works which he has there accumulated come to withdraw the attention from the distant magnificence of nature; while the weakness of the individual is forgotten in the aggregate force of numbers, or in the distractions of civilised life. But amidst the solitude of the Alps no such change can take place. The greatest works of man appear there

as nothing amidst the stupendous objects of nature; the distractions of artificial society are unknown amongst its simple inhabitants; and the individual is left in solitude to receive the impressions which the sublime scenery in which he is placed is fitted to produce. Upon minds so circumstanced the changes of external nature come to be considered as the immediate work of some invisible power; the shadows that fall in the lakes at sunrise, are interpreted as the indication of the approach of hostile bands; the howl of the winds through the forests is thought to be the lamentations of the dead, who are expiating their sins; and the mists that flit over the summits of the mountains, seem to be the distant skirts of vast armies borne on the whirlwind, and treading on the storm.

The Gothic ruins with which the Tyrol is filled, contribute in a remarkable manner to keep alive these superstitious feelings. In many of the valleys, old castles of vast dimensions are perched on the summit of lofty crags, or raise their mouldering towers high on the mountains above the aged forests with which they are surrounded. These castles, once the abode of feudal power, have long since been abandoned, or have gradually gone to decay, without being actually dismantled by the proprietors. With all of them the people connect some romantic or terrible exploit; and the bloody deeds of feudal anarchy are remembered with terror by the peasants who dwell in the villages at their feet. Lights are often observed at night in towers which have been uninhabited for centuries; and bloody figures have been distinctly seen to flit through their deserted halls. The armour which still hangs on the walls in many of the greater castles, has been observed to move, and the plumes to wave, when the Tyrolese arms were victorious in war. Groans are still heard in the neighbourhood of the dungeons where the victims of feudal tyranny were formerly slain; and the cruel Baron, who persecuted his people in his savage passion for the chase, is often heard to shriek in the forests of the Unterberg, and to howl as he flies from the dogs, whom he had trained to the scent of human blood.

Superstitions, too, of a gentler and more holy kind, have arisen from the devout feelings of the people, and the

associations connected with particular spots where persons of extraordinary sanctity have dwelt. In many of the farthest recesses of the mountains, on the verge of perpetual desolation, hermits in former times fixed their abode ; and the imagination of the peasants still fancies that their spirits hover around the spot where their earthly trials were endured. Shepherds who have passed in the gloom of the evening by the cell where the bones of a saint are laid, relate that they distinctly heard his voice as he repeated his evening prayers, and saw his form as he knelt before the crucifix which the piety of succeeding ages had erected in his hermitage. The image of many a patron saint has been seen to shed tears when a reverse has happened to the Tyrolese arms ; and the garlands which are hung round the crosses of the Virgin wither when the hand which raised them has fallen in battle. Peasants who have been driven by a storm to take shelter in the little chapels which are scattered over the country, have seen the crucifix bow its head ; and solemn music is heard at the hour of vespers in the higher chapels of the mountains. The distant pealing of the organ, and the chant of innumerable voices, is there distinctly perceptible ; and the peasant, when returning at night from the chase, often trembles when he beholds funereal processions, clothed in white, marching in silence through the gloom of the forests, or slowly moving on the clouds that float over the summit of the mountains.

A country so circumstanced, abounding with everything that is grand and beautiful in natural scenery, filled with Gothic castles, over which ruin has long ago thrown her softening hand, peopled by the phantoms of an extravagant yet sublime superstition, and still inhabited by a valiant and enthusiastic people, seems, of all others, to be the fit theatre of *poetical* fancy. It is truly extraordinary, therefore, that no poet has appeared to glean the legends and ballads that are scattered through this extraordinary country, to perpetuate the aërial beings with which superstition has filled its wilds, and to dignify its mouldering castles with the recital of the many heroic and romantic adventures which have occurred within their walls. When we recollect the unparalleled interest which the genius of the present day has given to the traditions and the character of the Scottish

people, it is impossible not to regret that no kindred mind has immortalised the still more wild and touching incidents that have occurred among the heroic inhabitants and sublime scenery of the Tyrol Alps. Let us hope that the military despotism of Austria will not long continue to smother the genius, by restraining the freedom, of those higher classes of her people where poetical talents are to be found ; and that, before the present traditions are forgotten, or the enthusiasm which the war has excited is subsided, there may yet arise the SCOTT of the south of Europe.

The great circumstance which distinguishes the Tyrolese from their neighbours the Swiss, to whom, in many respects, they bear a close resemblance, is the animation and *cheerfulness* of their character. The Swiss are, by nature, a grave and heavy people ; nor is this peculiar character the result of their republican institutions, for we are told by Planta, that their stupidity had become proverbial in France before the time of their republic. The Tyrolese, on the other hand, are distinguished by a cheerful and lively character ; they are full of fire and animation, enthusiastically devoted to their favourite pursuits, and extremely warm in their resentments. Public games are frequent in every valley ; and the keen penetrating look of the peasants shows with what alacrity they enter into any subject in which they are interested. This striking difference in the national character of the two people appears in their different modes of conducting war. Firm in the maintenance of their purpose, and undaunted in the discharge of military duty, the Swiss are valuable chiefly for their *stubborn* qualities—for that obstinate courage on which a commander can rely with perfect certainty for the maintenance of any position which may be assigned for their defence. It was their steady resistance, accordingly, which first laid the foundation of the independence of their republic, and which taught the Imperialists and the Burgundians at Laupen and Morat, that the pride of feudal power, and the ardour of chivalrous enterprise, may seek in vain to crush “the might that slumbers in a peasant’s arm.” In later times, the same disposition has been evinced in the conduct of the Swiss Guards in the Place Carrousel, all of whom were massacred

at their post without the thought of capitulation or retreat being once stirred amongst them. The Tyrolese, on the other hand, are more distinguished by their fiery and impetuous mode of fighting. In place of waiting, like the Swiss infantry, the charges of their enemies, they hurry on unbidden to the attack, and often accomplish, by the hardihood of the enterprise, what more cautious troops could never succeed in effecting. In this respect they resemble more nearly the Highland clans, who, in the rebellion in 1745, rushed with the broadsword on the English regiments; or the peasants of La Vendée, who, without cannon or ammunition, assaulted the veteran armies of the republic, and, by the fury of their onset, frequently destroyed armies with whom they would have been utterly unable to cope in a more regular system of warfare.

One reflection there is, which may be drawn from the determined valour of the Tyrolese, and their success against the disciplined armies of France, which it is of the utmost importance to impress steadily on our minds. It is this; that the changes in the art of war in modern times have produced *no alteration* on the ability of freedom to resist the aggressions of despotic powers; but that still, as in ancient times, the discipline and the numbers of arbitrary governments are alike unavailing against the stubborn valour of a free people. In every age, and in every part of the world, examples are to be found of the defeat of great and powerful armies, by the cool and steady resistance which characterises the inhabitants of free states. This is matter of proverbial remark; but it is of the more importance to observe, that this general steadiness and valour, which seek for no support but in the courage of the individual, can be attained only by the diffusion of *civil liberty*, and that the value of such qualities is as strongly felt in modern wars as it was in any former period of the world. It is related by Homer, that at the siege of Troy, the Trojan troops, in whom the vicinity of Asia had introduced the customs of Oriental warfare and the feelings of Oriental despotism, supported each other's courage by shouts and cries during the heat of the battles; while the Grecians, in whom, as Mitford has observed, the monarchical form of government was even then tempered by a strong mixture of republican free-

dom,* stood firm, in perfect silence, waiting the command of their chiefs. The passage is remarkable, as it shows how early, in the history of mankind, the great lines of distinction between the courage of freemen and that of slaves was drawn ; nor can we, perhaps, anywhere find, in the subsequent annals of the world, a closer resemblance to what occurred in the struggle between English freedom and French despotism on the field of Waterloo. “The Grecian phalanx,” says the poet,† “marched in close order, the leaders directing each his own band. The rest were mute ; insomuch, that you would say, *in so great a multitude there was no voice*. Such was the silence with which they respectfully watched for the word of command from their officers. But the cries of the Trojan army resembled the bleating of sheep when they are driven into the fold, and hear the cries of their lambs. Nor did the voice of one people rise from their lines, but a confused mixture of many tongues.”‡ The same distinction has been observed, in all periods of the world, between the native unbending courage of freemen, and the artificial or transitory ardour of the troops of despotic states. It was thus that the three hundred Spartans stood the shock of a mighty army in the defile of Thermopylæ ; and it was from the influence of the same feeling that, with not less devoted valour, the fifteen hundred Swiss died in the cemetery of St James in the battle of Bâle. The same individual determination which enabled the citizens of Milan to overthrow the whole feudal power of Frederick Barbarossa on the plain of Legnano, animated the shepherds of the Alps, when they trampled under foot the pride of the imperial nobility on the field of Sempach, and annihilated the chivalry of Charles the Bold on the shores of Morat. It was among the free inhabitants of the Flemish provinces

* Mitford, i. 158.

† Iliad, iv. 427.

‡ “Ὡς τότε ἐπασσύτεραι Δαναῶν κίνυντο φάλαγγες
 Νωλεμέως πόλεμόνδε· κέλευε δὲ οἷσιν ἕκαστος
 Ἑγεμόνων· οἱ δ’ ἄλλοι ἀκὴν ἴσαν—οὐδέ κε φαίης
 Τόσσον λαὸν ἔπεσθαι ἔχοντ’ ἐν στήθεσιν αὐδὴν—
 Σιγῇ δειδιότες σημάντορας· ἀμφὶ δὲ πᾶσιν
 Τεύχεα ποικίλ’ ἐλαμπε, τὰ εἰμένοι ἐστιχόωντο.
 Τρῶες δ’, ὥς τ’ οἷες πολυπάμονος ἀνδρὸς ἐν αὐλῇ
 Μυρίαί ἐστήκασιν ἀμελγόμεναι γάλα λευκόν,
 Ἀζηχὲς μεμακύναι, ἀκούουσαι ὅπα ἀρνῶν,
 Ὡς Τρώων ἀλαλητὸς ἀνὰ στρατὸν εὐρὺν ὀρώρει.”

—Iliad, iv. 430-437.

that Count Tilly found the materials of those brave Walloon guards who, as contemporary writers inform us, might be knocked down or trampled under foot, but could not be constrained to fly, by the arms of Gustavus at the battle of Leipsic ;* and the celebrity of the Spanish infantry declined from the time that the liberties of Aragon and Castile were extinguished by Charles V. “There is ample room,” as a late eminent writer† has well observed, “for national exultation at the names of Cressy, Poitiers, and Agincourt. So great was the disparity of numbers upon those famous days, that we cannot, with the French historians, attribute the discomfiture of their hosts merely to mistaken tactics and too impetuous valour. They yielded rather to the intrepid steadiness in danger, which had already become the characteristic of our English soldiers, and which, during four centuries, has insured their superiority wherever ignorance or infatuation has not led them into the field. But these victories, and the qualities that secured them, must chiefly be ascribed to the freedom of our constitution and the superior condition of the people. Not the nobility of England, not the feudal tenants, won the battles of Cressy and Poitiers, for these were fully matched in the ranks of France, but the yeomen who drew the bow with strong and steady arms, accustomed to its use in their native fields, and rendered fearless by personal competence and civil freedom.”‡

Now, after all that we have heard of the art of war being formed into a regular system, of the soldier being reduced to a mere machine, and of the progress of armies being made the subject of arithmetical calculation, it is truly consoling to find the discomfiture of the greatest and most disciplined army which the world has ever seen, brought about by the same cause which, in former times, has so often given victory to the cause of freedom ; to find the victories of Naefels and Morgarten renewed in the triumph of the Tyrolese patriots, and the ancient superiority of the English yeomanry asserted, as in the days of Cressy and Agincourt, on the field of Waterloo. Nor is it, perhaps, the least remarkable fact of that memorable day, that while the

* *Memoirs of a Cavalier*, by DEFOE.

† *Hallam's Middle Ages*, i. 74.

‡ 1 *Froissart*, i. c. 162.

French army, like the Trojans of old, animated their courage by incessant cries, the English battalions, like the Greek phalanxes, awaited *in silence* the charge of their enemies : proving thus, in the severest of all trials, that the art of war has made *no change* on the qualities essential in the soldier ; and that the determined courage of freemen is still able, as in the days of Marathon and Plataea, to overcome the utmost efforts of military power. It is interesting to find the same qualities distinguishing the armies of a free people in such distant periods of the world ; and it is the fit subject, not merely of national pride, but of universal thankfulness, to discover that there are qualities in the composition of a great army which it is beyond the power of despotism to command ; and that the utmost efforts of the military art, aided by the strongest incitements to military distinction, cannot produce that steady and unbending valour which springs from the enjoyment of CIVIL LIBERTY.

HANNIBAL

[BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, JUNE 1845]

Two thousand one hundred years ago a boy was born at Carthage, whose name and exploits have rendered his country immortal. His character stands forth with unparalleled lustre even from the bright pages of ancient story. It is hard to say whether he was greater as a patriot, a statesman, or a general. Invincible in determination, inexhaustible in resources, fertile in stratagem, patient of fatigue, cautious in council, bold in action, he possessed also that singleness of purpose, that unity of object, which more than all is the foundation of great achievements. Love of his country was his one and ruling principle. Hatred of its enemies his lasting and indelible passion. To these objects he devoted throughout life his great capacity : for this he lived, for this he died. From the time that he swore hatred to the Romans, while yet a boy, on the altars of Carthage, he never ceased to watch their designs, to contend with their forces, to resist their ambition. Alone of all his countrymen, he measured the extent of the danger with which his fatherland was threatened by the progress of their power. Alone he stood forth with the strength of a giant to combat it. But for the shameful neglect of his victorious army, by the jealousy of the rival faction at Carthage, he would have crushed the power of the legions, and given to Carthage, not Rome, the empire of the world. As it was, he brought the latter to the brink of ruin, and achieved triumphs over its armies greater than all other nations put together. After he was overthrown, it was comparatively an easy task to conquer the world. For this he

received in life exile, disgrace, and death : for this he has since obtained immortality. At his name the heart of the patriot has thrilled through every subsequent age. To celebrate his virtues, genius and learning have striven in every succeeding country ; and the greatest praise which the world can yet bestow on warriors is to compare them to Hannibal.

No name, even in the majestic annals of Roman victors, stands forth with lustre equal to that of the Carthaginian hero. These were made by their countrymen, but his countrymen were made by him. Scipio, Pompey, Cæsar himself, did not evince equal capacity : they had lesser difficulties to contend with ; they owed more to the support of others, and did not do so much by the strength of their individual arm, by the energy of their individual will. The institutions, the laws, the ideas, the manners, the very language of the Romans, were made for conquest : they sprang up from the earth a race of armed men. Virtue with them was derived from “manly valour :” an army was designated by a word which signified “exercised :”^{*} their generals were borne forward to conquest on the shields of the legions. Such was the spirit of the soldiers, that they were fairly impelled to victory by the pressure which urged them on ; such the determination of the people, that the armies were urged forward to the conquest of the world as by a supernatural power. The purposes of Providence, mysterious at the time, apparent afterwards, never were more clearly evinced than in the peculiar impress communicated to the Roman institutions. But the Carthaginians were a race, not of warriors, but of colonists. They rose to greatness, not by their military spirit, but by their commercial prosperity ; their outposts were, not the fortified camp, but the smiling seaport. Extending as far as the waters of the Mediterranean roll, they spread inwards from the sea-coast, not outwards from the camp ; the navy was the arm of their strength, not their land forces. Their institutions, habits, national spirit, and government, were all adapted to the extension of commerce, to the growth of manufactures, to the spread of a colonial empire. What, then, must have been the capacity of the man who could, by his single efforts, alter the character of a whole people ; chain victory at land to the

^{*} *Virtus* from *vir*—*exercitus* from *exerceo*.

standards of a maritime republic ; and bow down to the earth, on their own territory, that rival power, whose legions ere long triumphed over the armies of all the military monarchies of the world ?

The auxiliaries formed a considerable part, in point of numbers, of the Roman forces ; but the strength of the legions was to be found in the Roman citizens. It was that indomitable body of men, ever flowing out, yet ever full, animated with fiery passions, but directed by consummate prudence, panting for conquest and spoil, but patient of all the toils by which they were to be attained, which constituted the strength of the armies that conquered the world. But the Carthaginians had no body of citizens capable of forming such a force. They were nothing but a great and powerful seaport town, with its adjacent villas spreading along the coast of Africa. The people of Dido had not, like those of Romulus, established offshoots in the interior. No three-and-thirty colonies awaited the commands of the senate of Carthage, as they did of the consuls in the time of Fabius, to recruit the national armies. At its last extremity at Zama, twenty thousand native citizens were all that this mighty republic, which had so nearly achieved the conquest of the Capitol, could fit out to defend the country. The strength of the Punic armies consisted in what was merely an accessory to the Roman, the auxiliaries. It was the Numidian horse, the Balearic slingers, the Spanish infantry, the Gaulish broadswords, which proved so formidable in the ranks of Hannibal. It was literally, as Livy says, a "*coluvies omnium gentium*," which rolled down from the Alps, under his direction, to overwhelm the Romans on their own hearths. Twenty different languages, Polybius tells us, were not unfrequently spoken at the same time in the Carthaginian camp. What, then, must have been the capacity of the general who could still the jealousies, and overcome the animosities, and give unity to the operations of a vast army, composed of so many different tribes and people, and mould them all into so perfect a form that, for fifteen years during which he remained in Italy, after the first great defeats the consuls never once ventured to measure their strength with him in a pitched battle ?

If there is anything more astonishing than another in the

history of the Roman republic, it is the unconquerable spirit, the persevering energy, the invincible determination with which, under every calamity, and often in the very extremity of adverse fortune, they combined to struggle for the superiority, and at length attained it—not so much by conquering as by wearing out their adversaries. In no period of their long and glorious annals was this transcendent quality more strikingly evinced than in the second Punic War, when, after the battle of Cannæ, Capua, the second city of Italy, yielded to the influence of Hannibal, and nearly a half of the Roman colonies, worn out by endless exactions in men and money, refused to send any further succours. The heroic spirit the Roman senate then evinced, the extraordinary sacrifices they made, may, without exaggeration, be pronounced without parallel in the annals of mankind, if we reflect on the length of time during which these sacrifices were required. But while this invincible spirit augments our admiration of the Roman character, and makes us feel that they indeed deserved that mighty dominion which they afterwards attained, it takes much from the merit of their individual commanders. It was almost impossible to avoid ultimate success with such armies to lead, and so heroic a people to sustain the efforts and furnish the muniments of war. But the case was very different at Carthage. So vehement was the spirit of party which had seized upon its inhabitants, in consequence of the great accession of democratic power which had been conceded, fatally for the state, as Polybius tells us, a short time before to the people, that Hannibal could rely on no assistance from his own government. Though he brought the Romans to the very brink of ruin, and placed final victory within the grasp, as it were, of his country, yet it would not put out its hand to snatch it. His countrymen were more jealous of him than afraid of their enemies. Though he descended to the southern extremity of Italy, and drew near to Sicily, in order to obtain from the African shores the necessary succours to recruit his armies, wasted by the very number of his victories ; and though they had during great part of the time the superiority at sea, yet no supplies of men or money were ever despatched to him from home during the fifteen years he carried on the war in Italy, with the exception

of the army which his brother Hamilcar raised in Spain, and led across the Pyrenees and the Alps to perish on the Metaurus. What he did, he did by himself, and by his own unaided efforts. It was the contributions levied on the cities he conquered, which furnished his supplies ; it was the troops who flocked to his standard from the provinces he wrested from the Romans, which filled up the chasms in the ranks he led from Saguntum. Not more than twenty-six thousand men descended with him from the Alps ; of forty-eight thousand who fought at Cannæ, thirty thousand were Gaulish auxiliaries. There is no example recorded in history of a general doing things so great with means so small, and support from home so inconsiderable.

Every great commander of whom we read in military annals, possessed in a considerable degree the art of securing the affections and inspiring the confidence of his soldiers. Alexander the Great, Cæsar, Charles XII., Napoleon, exercised this ascendancy in the highest degree. The anecdotes preserved in the pages of Plutarch, and which every school-boy knows by heart, prove this beyond a doubt of the heroes of the ancient world ; the annals of the last century and of our own times demonstrate that their mantle had descended to the Swedish and French heroes. The secret of this marvellous power is always to be found in one mental quality. It is magnanimity which entrances the soldier's heart. The rudest breasts are accessible to emotion, from the display of generosity, self-denial, and loftiness of purpose in their commanders. When Alexander in the deserts of Arabia, on his return from India, poured the untasted water on the sand, he assuaged the thirst of a whole army ; when Cæsar addressed the Tenth Legion in mutiny by the title of "Quirites," the very word, which told them they were no longer the comrades of their general, subdued every heart ; when Charles XII., on his officers declaring themselves unable to undergo the fatigue of further watching, desired them to retire to rest, for he would go the rounds himself, he silenced every murmur in his army ; when Napoleon yielded up his carriages to the wounded in the Russian retreat, or drew aside his suite to salute, uncovered, the Austrian wounded conveyed from Austerlitz, and said "Honour to the brave in misfortune !" he struck a chord which vibrated in every heart of

his vast array. No general, ancient or modern, possessed this key to the generous affections in a higher degree than Hannibal ; and none ever stood so much, or so long, in need of its aid. In truth, it was the secret of his success ; the magic power which so long held together his multifarious array. We have few anecdotes indicating this ascendancy ; for the historians of the Romans, or their subjects the Greeks, were in no hurry to collect traits to illustrate the character of their enemy. But decisive evidence of its existence, and almost supernatural power, is to be found in the fact, that without the aid of reinforcements, and scarcely any remittances, from Carthage, he maintained the war in the heart of Italy with mercenary troops collected from every country of the earth, against the native soldiers of the bravest and most warlike people on the earth. We read of no mutinies or disobedience of orders among his followers. It were hard to say whether the fiery Numidian, the proud and desultory Spaniard, the brave but inconstant Gaul, or the covetous Balearic, was most docile to his direction, or obedient to his will. Great indeed must have been the ascendancy acquired by one man over such various and opposite races of men, usually the prey of such jealousies and divisions, and whom the most powerful coalition in general finds so much difficulty in retaining in subjection.

Of Hannibal's political wisdom and far-seeing sagacity, ancient history is full. Alone of all his contemporaries, he clearly, and from his very infancy, perceived the extent of the danger which threatened his country from the insatiable ambition and growing power of the Romans ; alone he pointed out the only mode in which it could be successfully combated. He was at once the Burke, the Pitt, and the Wellington of his country. Beyond all doubt, if his advice had been followed, and his enterprises duly supported, Carthage would have been victorious in the second Punic War. It was because his countrymen were not animated with his heroic spirit, nor inspired with his prophetic foresight, that they failed. They were looking after gain, or actuated by selfish ambition, while he was straining every nerve to avert danger. When he swore hatred to the Roman on the altar at nine years of age, he imbibed a principle which the

judgment of his maturer years told him was the only means of saving his country. To the prosecution of this object he devoted his life. From his first entrance into public duty till his last hour, when he swallowed poison to avoid being delivered up to the Romans, he never ceased to combat their ambition with all the powers of his gigantic intellect. If history had preserved no other proof of his profound political discernment, it would be sufficiently established by the memorable words he addressed to the senate of Carthage on the probable fate of Rome :—"Nulla magna civitas diu quiescere potest. Si fores hostem non habet, domi invenit; ut prævalida corpora ab externis causis tuta videntur, sed suis ipsis viribus conficiuntur. Tantum nimirum ex publicis malis sentimus quantum ad res privatas attinet, nec in eis quidquam acrius quàm pecuniæ damnum stimulat.*" If any one doubts the truth and profound wisdom of these remarks, let him reflect on the exact demonstration of these truths which was afforded two thousand years after, in the British empire.

He constantly affirmed that it was in Italy alone that Rome was vulnerable, and that by striking hard and often there, she might be conquered. He did not despair of effecting the deliverance of the world by a conflict on their own shores, even after the battle of Zama had to all appearance decisively settled the conflict in favour of the Capitol, and nothing remained to combat the legions but the unwarlike soldiers of the Eastern monarch. His own campaigns demonstrate that he was right. The Gauls and the Carthaginians in different ages brought the Romans to the brink of ruin; but it was by victories on the Tiber that Brennus and Hannibal penetrated to their gates. Nor is it difficult to see to what cause this comparative weakness at home of so great a military power was owing. Rome was not merely a powerful state, but the head of a great military confederacy; the resources which, partly by force, partly by inclination, and the natural appetite of mankind for victory and plunder, were ranged on her side, were in great part

* "No great state can long remain at rest. If it has not an enemy without, it will find one within, as powerful bodies seem safe from external causes, but are destroyed by their internal strength. So far only we sympathise with external evils, as they affect our private interests; nor in these does anything more keenly stimulate than pecuniary losses."

derived from foreign states. When she carried the war into foreign states, this formidable mass of auxiliaries doubled the strength of her legions ; when she was assailed at home, one half of them were lost, or appeared in the ranks of her enemies. The same cause appeared at a subsequent period in the campaigns of Napoleon. His armies were innumerable, his force irresistible, as long as he headed the forced confederacy of western Europe, and he invaded Russia with 500,000 men ; but when the disaster of Moscow, and the resurrection of Germany, brought the Russians into France, the boasted strength of the empire disappeared, its allies passed over to the other side, and the mighty conqueror was reduced to a painful defensive with 50,000 men on the plains of Champagne.

The Roman historians affirm that these great military virtues were balanced by corresponding vices. Every scholar knows the inimitable description of his character drawn by Livy. “*Has tantas viri virtutes ingentia vitia æquabant:—inhumana crudelitas ; perfidia plusquam Punica ; nihil veri, nihil sancti ; nullus deorum metus, nullum jusjurandum, nulla religio.*” * This, however, was his character as drawn by his enemies ; and by enemies who had suffered so much from his ability, that they were incapable of forming a correct judgment on the subject. But the truth of modern history has dispelled the illusion, and gathered facts sufficient even from their prejudiced sources to demonstrate that the moral virtues of Hannibal equalled his intellectual capacity. Certain it is, by their own admission, that his generosity on several important occasions afforded an example which the Romans would have done well to imitate, but which they showed themselves incapable of following. It was the judicious clemency which he showed to the allies, which at length won over so many of the Italian states to his side ; and if this is to be ascribed to policy, what are we to say to the chivalrous courtesy which prompted him to send back the dead body of his inveterate enemy Marcellus, surprised and slain by his Numidian horsemen, to obtain the honours of sepulture from his countrymen ? The Romans complained

* “These great virtues were counterbalanced by as great vices: inhuman cruelty, perfidy more than Punic, no regard to truth or sanctity, no fear of the gods, no regard to an oath or to religion.”—LIVY, lib. xxi., § 2.

of his cruelty ; but men feel cruelty keenly when it is exercised on themselves ; and there are no instances recorded of his exceeding the established and universal customs, ruthless as they were, of ancient warfare. Certain it is, that nothing he ever did equalled the savage and cold-blooded atrocity with which the Romans tortured and massacred the citizens of Capua and Syracuse, when those towns were again subdued by their arms. Hannibal's disposition appears to have been gay and cheerful ; there are many instances recorded of his indulgence, in presence of danger, in a gaiety of temper more akin to that of Henry IV. than the usual stern determination of ancient warriors. On one memorable occasion, when his army was in danger, and the spirit of his troops unusually depressed, he indulged in mirth and jests to such an extent in his tent, that he set his whole officers in a roar of laughter ; and these joyful sounds, heard by the soldiers without, restored confidence to the army, from the belief that no anxious thoughts clouded the brows of their chiefs. Hannibal, it is known, preserved a diary, and wrote a history of his campaigns, which was extant at a very late period in the ancient world. What an inestimable treasure would the journal of the private thoughts of such a man have been ! Modern times have few more irreparable losses to mourn.

The just pride and elegant flattery of the French historians have often led them to compare Napoleon's passage of the Great St Bernard to Hannibal's passage of the Pennine Alps : but without detracting from the well-earned fame of the French general, it may safely be affirmed that his achievement will bear no sort of comparison with that of the Carthaginian hero. When Napoleon began the ascent of the Alps from Martigny, on the shores of the Rhone, above the lake of Geneva, he found the passage of the mountains cleared by the incessant transit of two thousand years. The road, impracticable for carriages, was very good for horsemen and foot-passengers, and was daily traversed by great numbers of both in every season of the year. Comfortable villages, on the ascent and the descent, afforded easy accommodation to the wearied soldiers both by night and by day ; the ample stores of the monks at the summit, and the provident foresight of the French generals, had provided a meal to

every man and horse that passed. No hostile troops opposed their passage : the guns were drawn up in sledges made of hollowed firs ; and in four days from the time that they began the ascent from the banks of the Rhone, the French troops, without losing a man, stood on the Dorea Baltea, the increasing waters of which flowed towards the Po, amidst the gardens and vineyards and under the sun of Italy. But the case was very different, when Hannibal crossed from the shores of the Durance to the banks of the Po. The mountain sides, not yet cleared by centuries of laborious industry, presented a continual forest, furrowed at every hollow by headlong Alpine torrents ; bridges there were none to cross these perpetually recurring obstacles ; provisions, scanty at all times in those elevated solitudes, were then nowhere to be found, having been hid by the affrighted inhabitants on the approach of the invaders ; and a powerful army of mountaineers occupied the entrance of the defiles, defended with desperate valour the gates of their country, and, when dispersed by the superior discipline and arms of Hannibal's soldiers, still beset the ridges above their line of march, and harassed the troops by continual hostility. When the woody region was passed, and the vanguard emerged into the open mountain pastures, which lead to the verge of perpetual snow, fresh difficulties awaited them. The turf, from the gliding down of newly fallen snow on those steep declivities, was so slippery, that it was often scarcely possible for the men to keep their feet ; the beasts of burden lost their footing at every step, and rolled down in great numbers into the abysses beneath ; the elephants became restive amidst privations and a climate to which they were totally unaccustomed ; and the strength of the soldiers, worn out with incessant marching and fighting, began to sink before the continued toil of the ascent. Horrors, formidable to all, but in an especial manner terrible to African soldiers, awaited them at the summit. It was now the end of October ; winter in all its severity had already set in amid those lofty solitudes ; the mountain-sides, silent and melancholy even at the height of summer, when enamelled with flowers and dotted with flocks, presented then an unbroken sheet of snow ; the blue lakes which are interspersed over the level valley at their feet, were frozen over, and undistinguishable

from the rest of the dreary expanse, and a boundless mass of snowy peaks arose on all sides, presenting apparently an impassable barrier to further progress.

But it was then that the greatness of Hannibal shone forth in all its lustre. "That great general," says Arnold, "who felt that he now stood victorious on the ramparts of Italy, and that the torrent which rolled before him was carrying its waters to the rich plains of Cisalpine Gaul, endeavoured to kindle his soldiers with his own spirit of hope. He called them together ; he pointed out the valley beneath, to which the descent seemed the work of a moment. 'That valley,' he said, 'is Italy ; it leads us to the country of our friends the Gauls, and yonder is our way to Rome !' His eyes were eagerly fixed on that point of the horizon, and as he gazed, the distance between seemed to vanish, till he could almost fancy that he was crossing the Tiber and assailing the Capitol."* Such were the difficulties of the passage and the descent on the other side, that Hannibal lost thirty-three thousand men from the time he left the Pyrenees till he entered the plains of Northern Italy ; and he arrived on the Po with only twelve thousand Africans, eight thousand Spanish infantry, and six thousand horse. Napoleon's army, which fought at Marengo, was only twenty-nine thousand, but he had lost no men in the passage of the Alps, and only a few in the difficult passage across the precipices of Mont Albaredo, opposite the fort of Bard, in the valley of the Dorea Baltea. It is ridiculous, after this, to compare the passage of the Alps by Napoleon to their crossing by Hannibal. The French Emperor has many other titles, sufficiently well founded, to warrant a comparison with the Carthaginian hero, to render it necessary to recur to one which is obviously chimerical.

It is a question which has divided the learned since the revival of letters, by what pass Hannibal crossed the Alps. The general opinion of those who have studied the subject, inclines to the opinion that he crossed by the Little St Bernard ; and to this opinion Arnold inclines. He admits, however, with his usual candour, that, "in some respects, also, Mont Cenis suits the description of the march better than any other pass."† After having visited and traversed on foot

* *Arnold*, iii. 89.

† *Ibid.* iii. 486, note.

both passes, the author of this paper has no hesitation in expressing his decided conviction, that Hannibal passed by Mont Cenis. His reasons for this opinion are these :—

1. It is mentioned by Polybius, that Hannibal reached the summit of the Alps on the *ninth* day after he had left the plains of Dauphiné. This period coincides well with what might have then been required to ascend, as the country was, from the neighbourhood of Grenoble or Echelles ; while the ascent to the summit of the Little St Bernard would not require more than half the time.
2. The narrow defile of St Jean de Maurienne, which leads from the plain of Montmelian to the foot of Mont Cenis, corresponds much more closely with the description, given both in Livy* and Polybius,† of that in which the first serious engagement took place between Hannibal and the mountaineers, two days after they had left the plains of Dauphiné, than the comparatively open valley which leads to the foot of the Little St Bernard.
3. From the summit of the Little St Bernard you can see nothing of Italy, nor anything approaching to it ; a confused sea of mountains alone meets the eye on every side. Whereas, from the southern front of the summit of Mont Cenis, *not only the plains of Piedmont are distinctly visible* at the opening of the lower end of the valley of Susa, which lies at your feet, *but the Apennines beyond them can be seen.* To settle this important point, the author made a sketch of both on the spot, on the 24th October, the very time of Hannibal's passage, which is still in his possession. How precisely does this coincide with the emphatic words of Hannibal, as recorded by Polybius, showing to them the plains around the Po, (“τα περι τον Παδον πεδια ;”) and, reminding them of the good disposition of the Gauls who dwelt there, he further showed them the situation of Rome itself.‡ The Apennines, beyond the plain of Piedmont, seen from Mont Cenis, might correctly be taken as the direction, at least, where Rome lay.
4. The steep and rocky declivity by which the *old* road formerly descended to the valley of Susa, and where the travellers descended in sledges, till Napoleon's magnificent *chaussée* was formed, which makes a great circuit to the westward, corresponds perfectly to the famous places mentioned both by Livy and

* Livy, xxi. 33.

† Polybius, iii. 52.

‡ Ibid. iii. 54.

Polybius, where the path had been torn away by a recent avalanche, and the fabulous story of the vinegar was placed. This place in Mont Cenis is immediately below the summit of the pass, and may now be seen furrowed by a roaring torrent, amidst dark ledges of rock ; the corresponding chasm on the southern side of the little St Bernard is *below* the reach of avalanches.* 5. On the summit of Mont Cenis is still to be seen a “*white rock*” called the “*Roche Blanche*,” which answers to the “*λευκοπετρον*,” mentioned by Polybius, on the summit of the Alps which Hannibal crossed ; whereas there is nothing like it on the Little St Bernard, at least of such magnitude as to have formed a place of night refuge to Hannibal. 6. What is perhaps most important of all, it is expressly mentioned by Polybius, that “*in one day’s time* the chasm in the mountain-sides was repaired, so that there was room for the horses and beasts of burden to descend. They were immediately conducted down, *and having gained* the plains, were sent away to pasture in places where no snow had fallen. . . . Hannibal then descended last, with all the army, and thus, on the *third day*, gained the plains.”† This description of the distances tallies perfectly with the passage by Mont Cenis, for it is only half a day’s journey to descend from the summit of that pass to Susa, at the head of the wide and open valley of the same name, where ample pasturage is to be found ; and a short day’s journey more brings the traveller to the plain of Piedmont. But it is utterly irreconcilable with the idea that the Carthaginians passed by the Little St Bernard ; for from its summit to the plains of Ivrea is four days’ hard marching for an army, through the narrow valley of Aosta, destitute for the most part of forage. 7. This valley of Aosta is very rocky and narrow, and affords many positions where a handful of men can arrest an army ; in one of which, that of Bard, a small Austrian garrison stopped Napoleon for twenty-four hours ; yet Polybius and Livy

* “The way on every side was utterly impassable, through an accident of a peculiar kind, which is peculiar to the Alps. The snows of the former years *having remained* unmelted upon the mountains, were now covered over by that which had fallen in the present autumn ; and when the soldiers’ feet went through the latter, they fell, and slid down with great violence.”—POLYBIUS, iii. 54. This shows the place was within the circle of perpetual snow ; whereas that on the Little St Bernard is much below it, and far beneath any avalanches.

† Polybius, iii. 54.

concur in stating, that after they descended the mountains, the Carthaginians experienced no molestation on their way to the Insubrians, their allies, on the banks of the Po. This is inexplicable if they were struggling for three days through the narrow and rocky defiles of the valley of Aosta, but perfectly intelligible if they were traversing in half a day the broad and open valley of Susa, offering no facilities to the attacks of the mountaineers.

But if Napoleon's passage of the St Bernard can never be compared to that of Hannibal over Mont Cenis, it is impossible to deny that there is a marked and striking similarity, in some respects, between the career of the two heroes. Both rose to eminence, for the first time, by the lustre of their Italian campaigns ; the most brilliant strokes of both were delivered almost on the same ground, immediately after having surmounted the Alps ; both headed the forces of the democratic party in the country whose warriors they led, and were aided by it in those which they conquered ; both had a thorough aversion for that party in their hearts ; both continued, by their single genius, for nineteen years in hostility against a host of enemies ; both were overthrown at last, in a single battle, on a field far from the scene of their former triumphs ; both were driven into exile by the hatred or apprehensions of their enemies ; both, after having reached the summit of glory, died alone and unbefriended in distant lands ; both have left names immortal in the rolls of fame. It is no wonder that such striking similarities should have forcibly struck the imaginations of men in every land. It is remarkable that many of the greatest patriots who ever existed have died in exile, after having rendered inestimable services to their country, by which they were persecuted or betrayed. Themistocles, Hannibal, Scipio Africanus, Belisarius, belong to this bright band. It is not difficult to see that the cause of it is to be found in their very greatness itself. They were too powerful to be tolerated by their countrymen : they were too formidable to be endured by their enemies.

It is hard to say whether Hannibal's military capacity appeared most strongly in strategy—that is, the general direction of a campaign ; or in tactics—that is, the management of troops on the field of battle. In both he was unri-

valled in ancient times. His wonderful ability in strategy, and in preparing his multifarious forces for the grand enterprise for which they were destined, appear from the very outset of his military career. Devoted to the destruction of Rome from his youth upwards, and steady in the determination to overthrow that inveterate enemy to his country, he had yet the difficult and apparently hopeless task of accomplishing this by land warfare, when Carthage had no native-born army in the slightest degree commensurate to its execution. To form such an army was his first object, and this he accomplished by his successes in Spain, before the second Punic War began. In the interval between the first and the second of those dire contests, he was assiduously employed in conquering, organising, and disciplining the forces by which his great object was to be effected; and such was his capacity that, notwithstanding the untoward issue of the first Punic War, the Carthaginians gradually regained the ascendant in the Spanish Peninsula, while his manners were so winning, that ere long he attracted all its military strength to his standard. The Roman influence was limited to the narrow and broken territory which lies between the Ebro and the Pyrenees, and forms the modern province of Catalonia, while all the rest of the Peninsula obeyed the orders of Hannibal. It was in Spain that he formed that great military force which so soon after shook to its foundation the solid fabric of Roman power; he there erected the platform on which his engines of assault were placed. When he began his triumphant march from Saguntum to attempt the conquest of Rome, he was at the head of a splendid army of ninety thousand foot, and twelve thousand horse, with forty elephants—the most powerful array, if the quality and discipline of the troops is taken into account, which Europe had yet seen. Of this great force, not more than a fourth part were Carthaginian soldiers—so mightily had the military force of Hannibal increased with the prosperous issue of his Peninsular campaigns.

Had the Carthaginian general succeeded in reaching the banks of the Tiber with the half even of this force, the fate of Rome was sealed, and the glories of the Capitol were extinguished for ever. But he had innumerable difficulties to contend with—physical, warlike, and moral—before he

reached the Italian plains. His march from the Ebro to the Po was a continued combat. The mountain tribes of Catalonia, celebrated in every age for their obstinate and persistent hostility, were then firm in the Roman interest. The mountain strength of the Pyrenees ; the rapid currents of the Rhone ; the cruel warfare, and yet more dangerous peace, of the Gauls ; the desperate valour of the inhabitants of the Alps ; the inclemency of the weather on their snowy summits, all required to be overcome, and they thinned his ranks more than all the swords of the legions. Instead of ninety thousand foot, and twelve thousand horse, with which he broke up from Saguntum, he brought only twenty thousand infantry, and six thousand horse, to the fields of Piedmont. No less than seventy-six thousand men had been lost, or left to preserve the communications, since they left the Valencian plains. So slender was the force with which this great commander commenced, on its own territory, the conflict with a power which, ere three years had elapsed, carried on the war with fourteen legions, numbering, between the auxiliaries and Roman soldiers, a hundred and seventy thousand combatants. It is in the magnitude of this disproportion, and the extremely small amount of the reinforcements which he received from home during the next fifteen years that the war lasted, that the decisive proof of the marvellous capacity of the Carthaginian general is to be found. It is a similar disproportion which has marked the campaigns of Napoleon in Italy in 1796, and in France in 1814, with immortality.

The first necessity was to augment his numbers, and fill up the wide chasm in his ranks, by fresh enrolments in the territory which he had entered. The warlike habits and predatory dispositions of the Cisalpine Gauls afforded the means of obtaining this necessary succour. The victory over the Roman horse on the Ticino, when the superiority of the Numidian cavalry was first decisively displayed, had an immediate effect in bringing a crowd of Gaulish recruits to his standard. The Carthaginian general was careful in his first engagement to hazard only his cavalry, in which arm he was certain of his superiority. The battle of the Trebbia which followed, and which first broke the strength of the legions, excited an unbounded ferment in Lombardy,

and brought the Gaulish youths in crowds, to follow the career of plunder and revenge under his victorious standards. Recruits speedily were in abundance ; the only difficulty was to select from the crowds which presented themselves for enrolment. It was like the resurrection of Prussia in 1813, against the tyrannic domination of the French Emperor. Winter was spent in organising these rude auxiliaries, and reducing them to something like military discipline ; and so effective was their co-operation, and so numerous the reinforcements which their zeal brought to his standard, that in the following spring he crossed the Apennines, and traversed the marshes of Volterra, at the head of nearly fifty thousand men, of whom above one-half were Gaulish recruits. And when the Consul Flaminius attempted to stop him on the margin of the Trasymene Lake, where the stream still called "*Sanguinetto*" murmurs among the old oaks, the children of the soil, the total defeat of his army, with the loss of thirty thousand men, lost the Romans the whole north of Italy, and carried consternation to the gates of the Capitol.

After so great a victory within a few days' march of the Tiber, and no considerable army intervening to arrest the advance of the conqueror, it may seem extraordinary that Hannibal did not advance straight to the capital, and terminate the war by its destruction : still more inexplicable does it at first sight appear that, instead of doing so, he should have turned to the left, and, passing Rome, moved into the south of Italy ; thus losing in a great measure his communication with Lombardy, which had hitherto proved so invaluable a nursery for his army. But it was in these very movements, more, perhaps, than in any others of his life, that the wisdom and judgment of this great general's conduct were conspicuous. The chief difficulty he had now to contend with in Italy was the reduction of its fortified towns. Till he had gained farther military stores, he could not attempt the siege of Rome. It was in the south of Italy alone that they were to be found. The innumerable wars which had so long prevailed in the southern parts of the Peninsula, between the Etruscans, the Romans, and the Samnites, had studded the declivities of the Apennines with castles and fortified burghs, the walls of which in great part

still remain, and constitute not the least of the many interesting objects which Italy presents to the traveller. Towards the reduction of those cities, the tumultuary array of the Gauls, numerous and efficient as they were in the field, could not afford any assistance. Engines for assault or the reduction of walls they had none ; funds for the maintenance of a protracted methodical warfare were not to be looked for in their savage and half-cultivated plains. The communication with Spain, by the circuitous route of the Pyrenees and Alps, had been found, by dear-bought experience, to be difficult in the extreme. It could only be opened again by an army nearly as powerful as that which had first penetrated through it, under the guidance of his energetic will. It was in the south of the Peninsula, amidst its opulent cities and long-established civilisation, that the resources for a war of sieges could alone be looked for. It was there, too, that the most direct, the shortest, and, in fact, the only secure channel of communication with Carthage could be opened : to a Punic as to a British army, the true base of operations was the sea, the worst possible base for that of any other military power. Beyond all question, it was to the judicious choice of the south of Italy as his stronghold, and the combined skill and policy by which he contrived to detach a large part of its rich republics, with their harbours and places of strength, from the Roman alliance, that the subsequent protraction of the war for fifteen years is to be ascribed.

Such, however, was the terror of the Roman arms, and the influence acquired by the combined steadiness and severity of their rule, that this irruption into the south of Italy was not at first attended with the desired effect. In vain he had, in all preceding engagements, sent back all the prisoners from the allies without any ransom, and treated them in the most generous manner ; in vain, in all preceding marches, he had cautiously abstained from pillaging or laying waste their lands : still the Roman influence was predominant. Not one state in alliance had revolted ; not one Roman colony had failed in its duty to the parent state. The Gauls alone, who now formed half his army, had repaired in crowds to his standard since he had descended from the Alps. A long season of inactivity

followed, during which the Romans were too prudent to hazard a conflict with Hannibal in the field, and he was too weak in siege artillery to attempt the reduction of any of their fortified cities. But the time was not lost by that indefatigable commander; and the following passage from Arnold will both show how it was employed, and serve as a fair specimen of the style of that powerful and lamented writer :—

“Never was Hannibal’s genius more displayed than during this long period of inactivity. More than half of his army consisted of Gauls, of all barbarians the most impatient and uncertain in their humour, whose fidelity, it was said, could only be secured by an ever open hand; no man was their friend any longer than he could gorge them with pay or plunder. Those of his soldiers who were not Gauls, were either Spaniards or Africans; the Spaniards were the newly conquered subjects of Carthage, strangers to her race and language, and accustomed to divide their lives between actual battle and the most listless bodily indolence; so that when one of their tribes first saw the habits of a Roman camp, and observed the centurions walking up and down before the prætorium for exercise, the Spaniards thought them mad, and ran up to guide them to their tents, thinking that he who was not fighting, could do nothing but lie at his ease and enjoy himself. Even the Africans were foreigners to Carthage; they were subjects harshly governed, and had been engaged within the last twenty years in a war of extermination with their masters. Yet the long inactivity of winter quarters, trying to the discipline of the best national armies, was borne patiently by Hannibal’s soldiers; there was neither desertion nor mutiny amongst them; even the fickleness of the Gauls seemed spell-bound; they remained steadily in their camp in Apulia, neither going home to their own country, nor over to the enemy. On the contrary, it seems that fresh bands of Gauls must have joined the Carthaginian army after the battle of Thrasymenus, and the retreat of the Roman army from Ariminum. For the Gauls and the Spaniards and the Africans were overpowered by the ascendancy of Hannibal’s character; under his guidance they felt themselves invincible; with such a general, the yoke of Carthage might seem to the Africans and Spaniards the natural dominion of superior beings; in such a champion the Gauls beheld the appointed instrument of their country’s gods to lead them once more to assault the Capitol.”—Vol. iii. 131-132.

It was the battle of Cannæ which first shook the fidelity of the Roman allies, and by opening to the Carthaginians the gates of Capua, gave them the command of a city in the south of Italy, second only to Rome herself in wealth and consideration. Of this great and memorable battle, when upwards of eighty thousand Romans fell, and their power was, to all appearance, irrecoverably broken, Arnold gives the following interesting account :—

“The skirmishing of the light-armed troops preluded as usual to the battle; the Balearian slingers slung their stones like hail into the ranks of the Roman line, and severely wounded the consul Emilius himself. Then the

Spanish and Gaulish horse charged the Romans front to front, and maintained a standing fight with them, many leaping off their horses and fighting on foot, till the Romans, outnumbered and badly armed, without cuirasses, with light and brittle spears, and with shields made only of ox-hide, were totally routed and driven off the field. Hasdrubal, who commanded the Gauls and Spaniards, followed up his work effectually; he chased the Romans along the river, till he had almost destroyed them, and then, riding off to the right, he came up to aid the Numidians, who, after their manner, had been skirmishing indecisively with the cavalry of the Italian allies. These, on seeing the Gauls and Spaniards advancing, broke away and fled; the Numidians, most effective in pursuing a flying enemy, chased them with unweariable speed, and slaughtered them unsparingly; while Hasdrubal, to complete his signal services on this day, charged fiercely upon the rear of the Roman infantry.

“He found its huge masses already weltering in helpless confusion, crowded upon one another, totally disorganised, and fighting each man as he best could, but struggling on against all hope, by mere indomitable courage. For the Roman columns on the right and left, finding the Gaulish and Spanish foot advancing in a convex line or wedge, pressed forwards to assail what seemed the flanks of the enemy’s column; so that, being already drawn up with too narrow a front by their original formation, they now became compressed still more by their own movements, the right and left converging towards the centre, till the whole army became one dense column, which forced its way onwards by the weight of its charge, and drove back the Gauls and Spaniards into the rear of their own line. Meanwhile, its victorious advance had carried it, like the English column at Fontenoy, into the midst of Hannibal’s army; it had passed between the African infantry on its right and left, and now, whilst its head was struggling against the Gauls and Spaniards, its long flanks were fiercely assailed by the Africans, who, facing about to the right and left, charged it home, and threw it into utter disorder. In this state, when they were forced together into one unwieldy crowd, and already falling by thousands, whilst the Gauls and Spaniards, now advancing in their turn, were barring further progress in front, and whilst the Africans were tearing their mass to pieces on both flanks, Hasdrubal, with his victorious Gaulish and Spanish horsemen, broke with thundering fury upon their rear. Then followed a butchery such as has no recorded equal, except the slaughter of the Persians in their camp, when the Greeks forced it after the battle of Plataea. Unable to fight or fly, with no quarter asked or given, the Romans and Italians fell before the swords of their enemies, till, when the sun set upon the field, there were left, out of that vast multitude, no more than three thousand men alive and unwounded, and these fled in straggling parties, under cover of the darkness, and found a refuge in the neighbouring towns. The consul Emilius, the pro-consul Cn. Servilius, the late master of the horse M. Minucius, two quæstors, twenty-one military tribunes, eighty senators, and eighty thousand men, lay dead on the field of battle. The consul Varro, with seventy horsemen, had escaped from the rout of the allied cavalry on the right. The loss of the victors was only six thousand men.”—*Arnold*, iii. 140-143.

The dreadful battle of Cannæ bears a close resemblance in many important particulars to two of the most important which have been fought in modern times—those of Agincourt and Aspern. The close agglomeration of legionary soldiers in the Roman centre, the tempest of stones which fell on their ranks from the slings of the Balearic marksmen, and

the laying bare of the huge unwieldy mass by the defeat of the cavalry on their flanks, was precisely the counterpart of what occurred in the army of Philippe of Valois in the first of these memorable fields, when the French men-at-arms, thirty-two deep, were thrown into confusion by the incessant discharges of the English archers, their flanks laid open by the repulse of the vehement charge of their horse by Henry V., and their dense columns slaughtered where they stood, unable alike to fight or to fly, by the general advance of the English billmen. Still closer, perhaps, is the resemblance to the defeat of the French centre under Lannes, which penetrated in a solid column into the centre of the Austrian army at Aspern. Its weight, and the gallantry of the leading files, brought the huge mass even to the reserves of the Archduke ; but that gallant prince at length stopped their advance by six regiments of Hungarian grenadiers ; the German artillery and musketry tore their flanks by an incessant discharge on either side ; and at length the formidable column was forced back like an immense wild beast bleeding at every pore, but still combating and unsubdued. The repulse of the formidable English column, 14,000 strong, which defeated in succession every regiment in the French army except the last reserve of two regiments of guards at Fontenoy, and the still more momentous defeat of the last attack of the Imperial Guard at Waterloo, also bear a striking and interesting resemblance to the rout of the Roman centre after it had penetrated the Carthaginian line at the battle of Cannæ. In truth, the attack in column, formidable beyond measure if not met by valour and combated with skill, is exposed to the most serious dangers if the line in its front is strong and resolute enough to withstand the impulse, till its flanks are overlapped and enveloped by a cross fire from the enemies' lines, converging inwards, as Colborne and Maitland did at Waterloo on the flank of the Old Guard ; and thence it is that the French attack in column, so often victorious over the other troops of Europe, has never succeeded against the close and destructive fire of the English infantry, guided by the admirable dispositions with which Wellington first repelled that formidable onset.

Arnold, whose account of Hannibal's campaigns in Italy is by much the best which has been given in modern times

to the world, and more scientific and discriminating than either of the immortal narratives of the ancient historians, has clearly brought out two important truths from their examination. The first is, that it was Hannibal's superiority in cavalry, and, above all, the incomparable skill and hardihood of his Numidian horse, which gave him what ere long proved an undisputed superiority in the field ; the second, that it was the strength of the towns in the Roman alliance in the south of Italy, and the want of siege artillery on the side of the Carthaginian general, which proved their salvation. So undisputed did the superiority of the invading army become, that, after the battle of Cannæ, it was a fixed principle with the Roman generals, during the thirteen subsequent campaigns that ensued in Italy, as it was with the ablest generals of the Scotch and French, during their wars with the Plantagenet princes, never on any occasion, or with any superiority of force whatever, to hazard a general battle. Such was their terror of the African horse, that the sight of a few Numidian uniforms in the fields was sufficient to make a whole consular army stand to its arms. So paralysed was the strength of Rome by the slaughter of Cannæ, that Capua soon after revolted and became the headquarters of Hannibal's army ; and, out of the thirty Roman colonies, no less than twelve sent in answer to the requisitions of the consuls, that they had not a man or a penny more to send, and that Rome must depend on its own resources. Never, not even when the disasters of Thrasymene and Cannæ were first heard, was such consternation apparent in Rome, as when that mournful resolution was communicated in the Forum.

In truth, such was the prostration of the strength of Rome by these terrible defeats, that the republic was gone, but for the jealousy of the Carthaginian government, which hindered them from sending any efficient succours to Hannibal, and the unconquerable spirit of the Roman aristocracy, which rose with every disaster that ensued, and led them to make efforts in behalf of their country which appear almost superhuman, and never have been equalled by any subsequent people on earth. Republican as he is in his ideas, Arnold, with his usual candour as to facts, admits, in the strongest manner, those prodigious efforts made by the patricians of Rome on this memorable occasion ; and that the issue of the

contest, and with it the fate of the civilised world, depended on their exertions. Out of 270,000 men, of whom the citizens of Rome consisted before the war, no less than 70,000 were in arms in its fourth year. No such proportion has ever since been heard of in the world. One in a hundred of the whole population is the utmost which experience has shown a state is capable of bearing, for any length of time, in her regular army. "As Hannibal," says he, "utterly eclipses Carthage, so, on the contrary, Fabius, Marcellus, Claudius Nero, even Scipio himself, are as nothing when compared to the spirit, and wisdom, and power of Rome. The senate, which voted its thanks to its political enemy Varro, 'because he had not despaired of the commonwealth,' and which disdained either to solicit, or to reprove, or to threaten, or in any way to notice the twelve colonies which had refused to send their accustomed supplies of men for the army, is far more to be honoured than the conqueror of Zama. Never was the wisdom of God's providence more manifest than in the issue of the struggle between Rome and Carthage. It was clearly for the good of mankind that Hannibal should be conquered; his triumph would have stopped the progress of the world. For great men can only act permanently by forming great nations; and no one man, even though it were Hannibal himself, can, in one generation, effect such a work. But where the nation has been merely enkindled for a while by a great man's spirit, the light passes away with him who communicated it; and the nation, when he is gone, is like a dead body to which magic power had for a moment given an unnatural life; when the charm has ceased, the body is cold and stiff as before. He who grieves over the battle of Zama should carry on his thoughts to a period thirty years later, when Hannibal must, in the course of nature, have been dead; and consider how the isolated Phœnician city of Carthage was fitted to receive and to consolidate the civilisation of Greece, or by its laws and institutions to bind together barbarians of every race and language into an organised empire, and prepare them for becoming, when that empire was dissolved, the free members of the commonwealth of Christian Europe." *

Such was Hannibal; a man capable by his single capacity

* *Arnold*, iii. 64-65.

of arresting and all but overturning a nation destined by Providence for such mighty achievements, and such lasting services to the human race. His combat with Rome was not that of a general with a general, of an army with an army ; it was like the subsequent contest between Napoleon and England, the contest of a man with a nation ; and in both cases, the nation, after being reduced to the most grievous straits, proved victorious over the man. But Hannibal was not supported as the French emperor was during the great part of his splendid career ; no nation with 40,000,000 of souls laid its youth at his feet ; no obsequious senate voted him 2,000,000 of men in fifteen years ; he did not march with the military strength of the half of Europe at his back. Alone, unaided, unbefriended, with the Roman legions in front, and the jealous Carthaginian senate in rear, without succour, reinforcements, or assistance from home, he maintained the contest for fifteen years in Italy, against the might, the energy, and the patriotism of Rome. Such was the terror inspired by his name and exploits, that it rendered even the fierce plebeians of Rome, usually so jealous of patrician interference with their rights, obsequious even in the comitia to their commands. "Go back," said Fabius, when the first centuries had returned consuls of their own choice, whom he knew to be unfit for the command, "and bid them recollect that the consuls must head the armies, and that Hannibal is in Italy." The people succumbed, the votes were taken anew, and the consuls whom he desired were returned.

After the battle of Cannæ had rendered hopeless any further contest in the field, the war in Italy degenerated into a mere succession of attempts to gain possession of fortified towns. Hannibal's total want of siege artillery left him no resource for this but stratagem or internal assistance, and, in gaining both, his great capacity was eminently conspicuous. Capua, Beneventum, Tarentum, and a great many others, were successively wrested or won from the Romans ; and it at one period seemed exceedingly doubtful whether, in this conflict of posts and stratagems, the Carthaginian would not prevail over them, as he had done in the field. This war, and from the influence of the same necessity in both cases, much resembled the wars of the

League and Henry IV. in France ; and the military conduct of Hannibal bore alternately a striking resemblance to the skill and resources of the chivalrous king of Navarre, and the bold daring of the emperor Napoleon. The gallant irruption, in particular, of the Carthaginian general, by which he relieved Capua when closely besieged by the Roman forces, bears, as Arnold has observed, the most remarkable resemblance to the similar march of Napoleon from Silesia, to relieve Dresden when beset by the Allied armies under the command of Schwartzenberg, in 1813. Nor did the admirable skill of the consul Nero—who took advantage of his interior line of communication, and brought a decisive superiority of force from the frontiers of Apulia to bear on the army which Hamilcar had led across the Pyrenees and the Alps, to aid his brother in the south of Italy, and thus decide the war in Italy—bear a less striking analogy to Napoleon's cross marches from Rivoli to the neighbourhood of Mantua in 1796, to the able movement of the Archduke Charles from the Bavarian plains to the banks of the Maine, which proved the salvation of Germany in 1796, or to the gallant irruption of Napoleon, first into the midst of Blucher's scattered columns on the plains of Champagne, and then against the heads of Schwartzenberg's weighty columns at the bridge of Montereau in 1814, during his immortal campaign in France.

Dr Arnold's regular history did not, unfortunately, come down to the battle of Zama, but the following account of that memorable battle is taken from one of his earlier productions :—

“ The numbers on each side we have no knowledge of ; but probably, in this respect, neither was much superior. Massinissa, with 4000 Numidian horse, besides 6000 infantry, had joined Scipio a few days before the battle ; while Hannibal, who had been so often indebted to the services of Numidians, had now, on this great occasion, only 2000 horses of that nation to oppose to the numbers and fortune and activity of Massinissa. The Roman legions were drawn up in their usual order, except that the maniples of every alternate line did not cover the intervals in the line before them, but behind one another, thus leaving avenues in several places through the whole depth of the army, from front to rear. These avenues were loosely filled by the light troops, who received orders to meet the charges of the elephants, and to draw them down the passages left between the maniples, till they should be enticed entirely beyond the rear of the whole army. The cavalry, as usual, was stationed on the wings ; Massinissa with his Numidians on the right, and Laelius with the Italians on the left. On the other side, Hannibal stationed his elephants, to the number of eighty, in front of his whole line. Next to these were placed the foreign troops in the service of

Carthage, 12,000 strong, consisting of Ligurians, Gauls, Balearic slingers, and Moors. The second line was composed of those Africans who were the immediate subjects of Carthage, and the Carthaginians themselves; while Hannibal himself, with his veteran soldiers, who had returned with him from Italy, formed a third line, which was kept in reserve at a little distance behind the other two. The Numidian cavalry were, on the left, opposed to their own countrymen under Massinissa; and the Carthaginian horse, on the right, opposed to Laelius and the Italians. After some skirmishing between the Numidians and the two armies, Hannibal's elephants advanced to the charge; but being startled by the sound of the Roman trumpets, and annoyed by the light-armed troops of the enemy, some broke off to the right and left, and fell in amongst the cavalry of their own army on both the wings; so that Laelius and Massinissa, availing themselves of this disorder, speedily drove the Carthaginian horse from the field—others advanced against the enemies' line, and did much mischief, till at length being frightened, and becoming ungovernable, they were enticed by the light-armed troops of the Romans to follow them down the avenues which Scipio had purposely left open, and were thus drawn out of the action altogether. Meantime, the infantry on both sides met, and, after a fierce contest, the foreign troops in Hannibal's army, not being properly supported by the soldiers in the second line, were forced to give ground; and, in resentment for this desertion, they fell upon the Africans and Carthaginians, and cut them down as enemies; so that these troops, at once assaulted by their fellow-soldiers and the pursuing enemy, were also, after a brave resistance, cut down or dispersed. Hannibal, with his reserve, kept off the fugitives by presenting spears to them, and obliging them to escape in a different direction; and he then prepared to meet the enemy, trusting that they would be ill able to resist the shock of a fresh body of veterans, after having already been engaged in a long and obstinate struggle. Scipio, after having extricated his troops from the heap of dead which lay between him and Hannibal, commenced a second and a far more serious contest. The soldiers, on both sides, were perfect in courage and discipline; and as the battle went on, they fell in the ranks where they fought, and their places were supplied by their comrades with unabated zeal. At last Laelius and Massinissa returned from the pursuit of the beaten enemies' cavalry, and fell in a critical moment upon the rear of Hannibal's army. Then his veterans, surrounded and overpowered, still maintained their high reputation, and most of them were cut down where they stood, resisting to the last. Flight, indeed, was not easy, for the country was a plain, and the Roman and Numidian horses were active in pursuit; yet Hannibal, when he saw the battle totally lost, with a nobler fortitude than his brother had shown at the Metaurus, escaped from the field to Adrumetum. He knew that his country would now need his assistance more than ever; and, as he had been in so great a degree the promoter of the war, it ill became him to shrink from bearing his full share of the weight of its disastrous issue."—Vol. iii. 451, 453.

Such was the famous and decisive battle of Zama, which, in many particulars, though the result was different, resembles that of Albuera, and, like that of Cannæ, was owing to the Numidian horse, who, by the skill and arts of Scipio, had now been brought over to the Roman side.

Eight years have now elapsed since we had the gratification of reviewing, on its publication, the first volume of Arnold's Rome;* and we then foretold the celebrity which

* See ROMAN REPUBLIC, p. 103.

that admirable writer was qualified to attain. The publication, since that period, of two additional volumes has amply verified that prediction ; and augmented the bitterness of the regret which, in common with all his countrymen, we felt at his untimely death. It is clear that he was qualified, beyond any modern writer who has yet undertaken the glorious task, to write a history of the rise and progress of the Roman Republic. What a work would eight volumes such as that before us on Hannibal have formed, in conjunction with Gibbon's immortal Decline and Fall ! His ardent love of truth, his warm aspirations after the happiness of the human race, his profound and yet liberal religious feelings, as much gave him the spirit requisite for such an undertaking, as his extensive scholarship, his graphic power, his geographical eye, and brilliant talents for description, fitted him for carrying it into execution. The death of such a man, in the zenith of his power and the opening of his fame, is one of the most melancholy events of our times, and has reft one of the brightest jewels from the literary crown of England. Arnold was a Liberal writer ; but what then ? We love and respect an honest opponent. He was candid, ingenuous, and truth-loving ; and if a historian is such, it matters not what his political opinions are, for he cannot avoid stating facts that support the Conservative side. His errors, as we deem them, in politics, arose from the usual causes which mislead men on human affairs—generosity of heart and inexperience of mankind. He could not conceive, with an imagination warmed by the heroes of antiquity, what a race of selfish pigmies the generality of men really are. No man of such an elevated cast can do so, till he is painfully taught it by experience. Arnold died of a disease of the heart, which physicians have named by the expressive words "*angina pectoris*." They were right : it was anxiety of the heart which brought him to an untimely grave. Who can estimate the influence on so sensitive and enthusiastic a disposition, of the heart-rending anguish which his correspondence proves he felt at the failure of his long-cherished hopes and visions of bliss in the Reform Bill, and on account of all the long catalogue of political and social evils, now apparent to all, it has brought in its train ?

NAPOLÉON

[BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, JULY 1832]

THE age of Napoleon is one, of the delineation of which history and biography will never be weary. Such is the variety of incidents which it exhibits—the splendid and heart-stirring events which it records—the immortal characters which it portrays, and the important consequences which have followed from it, that the interest felt in its delineation, so far from diminishing, seems rather to increase with the lapse of time, and will continue through all succeeding ages, like the eras of Themistocles, Cæsar, and the Crusades, to form the noblest and most favourite subject of historical description.

Numerous as have been the Memoirs which have issued from the French press during the last fifteen years, in relation to this eventful era, the public passion for information on it is still undiminished. Every new set of Memoirs which is ushered into the world with a historical name, or any pretensions to authenticity, is eagerly read by all classes on the Continent. English translations generally appear in due time, but they are, in general, so extremely ill executed, as to give no conception whatever of the spirit of the original; and as there is not one reader out of a hundred who can read French with such facility as to make it a matter of pleasure, the consequence is, that these delightful works are still but imperfectly known to the British public. Every person intimately acquainted with their composition, must have perceived in what an extremely unfavourable aspect they appear in our ordinary translations; and in the utter igno-

Memoirs of the Duchess of Abrantes. 2 vols. Colburn. London. The Translations are executed by ourselves, as we have not seen the English version.

rance of the principles of revolution which pervades the great bulk of the best informed classes in this country, compared to what obtains on the other side of the Channel, is to be found the best evidence, that the great historical works which have recently appeared on the events of the last forty years in France, have had no share whatever in the formation of public opinion in this country.

The Duchess of Abrantes undertakes the work of Memoirs of her own Times with singular and almost peculiar advantages. Her mother, Madame Permon, a Corsican lady of high rank, was extremely intimate with the family of Napoleon. She rocked the future emperor on her knee from the day of his birth, and the intimacy of the families continued till he was removed to the command of the army of Italy, in April 1796. The authoress herself, though then a child, recounts with admirable esprit, and all the air of truth, a number of early anecdotes of Napoleon ; and after his return from Egypt she was married to Junot, then Governor of Paris, and subsequently admitted as a habitual guest in the court circle of the First Consul. In her Memoirs, we have thus a picture of the private and domestic life of Napoleon from his cradle to his grave ; we trace him through all the gradations of the *Ecole Militaire*, the artillery service, the campaigns of Italy, the return from Egypt, the Consulate, and the Empire, and live with those who have filled the world with their renown, as we would do with our most intimate acquaintances and friends.

It has always struck us as a singular proof of the practical sagacity and just discrimination of character in Sir Walter Scott, that though his *Life of Napoleon* was published before the *Memoirs of Bourrienne*, the view which he gives of Napoleon's character is substantially the same as that drawn by his confidential secretary, his school companion, and the depositary of his inmost thoughts. This is very remarkable. The French are never weary of declaiming on the inaccuracies of the Scottish biographer, and declare that he wrote history in romance, and romance in history ; but they have never been able to point out any serious or important error in his narrative. The true reproach against Sir Walter's work is of a different kind, and consists in this, not that he has incorrectly stated facts, but unjustly coloured opinions ;

that he has not done justice to any of the parties whose conflicts desolated France during the Revolution, and has written rather in the spirit of an English observer, that one participant in the feelings of the actors in those mighty events. There is but one way in which this defect can be avoided by a native of this country, and that is, by devoting himself for years to the study of the memoirs and historians of the Revolution, and by acquiring, by incessant converse with the writings, somewhat of the spirit which animates the people of the Continent. The object to be attained by this, is not to imbibe their prejudices, or become infatuated by their errors, but to know and appreciate their ideas, and do that justice to passions directed against this country, which we willingly award to those excited in its favour.

The character of Napoleon has been drawn by his contemporaries with more graphic power than that of any other conqueror in history ; and yet so varied and singular is the combination of qualities which it exhibits, and so much at variance with what we usually observe in human nature around us, that there is no man can say he has a clear perception of what it actually was. Brave, without being chivalrous ; sometimes humane, seldom generous ; insatiable in ambition ; inexhaustible in resources ; without a thirst for blood, but totally indifferent to it when his interests were concerned ; without any fixed ideas on religion, but a strong perception of its necessity as a part of the mechanism of government ; a great general with a small army, a mighty conqueror with a large one ; gifted with extraordinary powers of perception, and the clearest insight into every subject connected with mankind ; without extensive information derived from study, but with the rarest aptitude for making himself master of every subject from actual observation ; ardently devoted to glory, and yet incapable of the self-sacrifice which constitutes its highest honour, he exhibited a mixture of great and selfish qualities, such as perhaps never were before combined in any single individual. His greatest defect was the total and systematic disregard of truth which pervaded all his thoughts. He was totally without the *droiture*, or honesty, which forms the best and most dignified feature in the Gothic or German character. The maxim, *Magna est veritas et prævalebit*, never seems to have crossed his mind. His intellect was

the perfection of that of the Celt or Greek, without a shadow of the magnanimity and honesty which has ever characterised the Roman and Gothic races of mankind. Devoted as he was to the captivating idol of posthumous fame ; deeming, as he did, that to live in the recollection and admiration of future ages “constituted the true immortality of the soul,” he never seems to have been aware that truth is essential to the purest and most lasting celebrity ; and that the veil which artifice or flattery draws over falsehood during the prevalence of power, will be torn away with a merciless hand on its termination.

In the memoirs of Napoleon and of the Archduke Charles, the opposite character of their minds, and of the races to which they belonged, is singularly portrayed. Those of the latter are written with a probity, an integrity, and an impartiality above all praise ; he censures himself for his faults with a severity unknown to Cæsar or Frederick, and touches with a light hand on those glorious successes which justly gained for him the title of Saviour of Germany. Cautious, judicious, and reasonable, his arguments convince the understanding, but neither kindle the imagination nor inspire the fancy. In the Memoirs of Napoleon, on the other hand, dictated to Montholon and Gourgaud, there are to be seen in every page symptoms of the clearest and most forcible intellect ; a *coup d'œil* over every subject of matchless vigour and reach ; an ardent and impassioned imagination ; passions which have ripened under a southern sun, and conceptions which have shared in the luxuriant growth of tropical climates. Yet amidst all these varied excellences, we often regret the simple *bonhomie* of the German narrative. We admire the clearness of the division, the lucid view of every subject, the graphic power of the pictures, and the forcible perspicuity of the language ; but we have a total want of confidence in the veracity of the narrative. In every page we discover something suppressed or coloured, to magnify the importance of the writer in the estimation of those who study his work ; and while we incessantly recur to it for striking political views, or consummate military criticism, we must consult works of far inferior celebrity for the smallest details in which his fame was personally concerned. We may trust him in speculations on the future

destiny of nations, the march of revolutions, or the cause of military success ; but we cannot rely on the numbers stated to have been engaged, or the killed and wounded in a single engagement.

The character of Napoleon has mainly rested, since the publication of that work, on Bourrienne's Memoirs. The peculiar opportunities which that writer had of becoming acquainted with the inmost thoughts of the First Consul, and the ability and graphic powers of his narrative, have justly secured for it a great reputation. It is probable that the private character and hidden motives of Napoleon will in some degree rest with posterity on that celebrated work. Every day brings out something to support its veracity ; and the concurring testimony of the most intelligent of the contemporary writers tends to show, that his narrative is, upon the whole, the most faithful that has yet been published. Still it is obvious that there is a secret rankling at the bottom of Bourrienne's heart against his old schoolfellow. He could hardly be expected to forgive the extraordinary rise and matchless celebrity of one who had so long been his equal. He evinces the highest admiration for the Emperor, and, upon the whole, has probably done him justice ; yet, upon particular points, a secret spleen is apparent ; and though there seems no ground for discrediting any of his facts, yet we must not in every instance adopt implicitly the colouring in which he has painted them. It is quite plain that Bourrienne was involved in some money transactions, in which Napoleon conceived that he made an improper use of the state secrets which came to his knowledge, in his official situation of private secretary ; and that to this cause his exile into honourable and *lucrative* banishment at Hamburg is to be ascribed. Whether this banishment was justly or unjustly inflicted, is immaterial in considering the credit due to the narrative. If he was hardly dealt with, while our opinion of his individual integrity must rise, the weight of the feelings of exasperation with which he was animated must receive a proportional augmentation.

The Memoirs of the Duchess of Abrantes are well qualified to correct the bias, and supply the deficiencies of those of the private secretary. As a woman, she had no personal rivalry with Napoleon, and could not feel mortified by

his transcendant success. As the wife of one of his favourite and most prosperous generals, she had no secret reasons of animosity against the author of her husband's elevation. Her intimate acquaintance also with Napoleon, from his very infancy, and before flattery or power had aggravated the faults of his character, renders her peculiarly well qualified to portray its original tendency. Many new lights, accordingly, have been thrown upon the eventful period of his reign, as well as on his real character, by her *Memoirs*. His disposition appears in a more amiable light—his motives are of a higher kind than preceding accounts led us to conceive ; and we rise from the perusal of her fascinating volumes with the impression, which the more extensively we study human nature we shall find to be the more correct, that men are generally more amiable at bottom than we should be inclined to imagine from their public conduct ; that their faults are fully as much the result of the circumstances in which they are placed, as of any inherent depravity of disposition ; and that, dealing gently with those who are carried along on the stream of revolution, we should reserve the weight of our indignation for those who put the perilous torrent in motion.

But, leaving these general speculations, it is time to lay before our readers a few extracts from these volumes themselves, and to communicate some portion of the pleasure which we have derived from their perusal. In doing so we shall adopt our usual plan of translating the passages ourselves ; for it is impossible to convey the least idea of the original in the circumlocutions of the ordinary London versions.

Of the early youth of Napoleon at the *Ecole Militaire* of Paris, with the management of which he was in the highest degree dissatisfied, we have the following interesting account:—

“ When we got into the carriage, Napoleon, who had contained himself before his sister, broke out into the most violent invectives against the administration of such places as the *Maison St Cyr*, for young ladies, and the *Ecole Militaire* for cadets. My uncle, who was extremely quick in his temper, at last got out of all patience at the tone of cutting bitterness which appeared in his language, and told him so without reserve. Napoleon was then silent, for enough of good breeding still remained to make youth respect the voice of those advanced in years. But his heart was so full as to be almost bursting. Shortly after he led back the conversation to the subject, and at

last his expressions became so offensive that my father said to him rudely, 'Be silent ; it ill becomes you, who are educated at the expense of the King, to speak in that manner.'

"My mother has often since told me, she was afraid Napoleon would have been suffocated at these words. In an instant he became pale and inarticulate. When he recovered his voice, he exclaimed, in a voice trembling with emotion, 'I am not an élève of the King, but of the *State*.'

" 'A fine distinction truly,' replied my uncle. 'Whether you are an élève of the King, or of the State, is of no consequence ; besides, is not the King the State ? I desire that you will not speak in such terms of your benefactor in my presence.'

" 'I will do nothing to displease you, M. Comnene,' replied the young man. 'Permit me only to add, that *if I was the master*, and had the power to alter these regulations, they should be very different, and for the good of the whole.'

"I have recounted that scene only to remark these words—'*If I was the master*.' He has since become so, and all the world knows what he has done for the administration of the Ecole Militaire. I am convinced that he long entertained a painful sense of the humiliation he underwent at that establishment. At our arrival in Paris, he had been a year there, and that whole period was one of contradiction and disgust. He was not loved by his companions : Many persons who were acquainted with my father, declared to him that Napoleon's character was such as could not be rendered sociable. He was discontented with everything, and expressed his censure aloud in such decided terms, as made him pass with these old worthies for a young firebrand. The result of this conduct was, that his removal into a regiment was unanimously demanded by every one at the school, and thus it advanced the period of his promotion. He obtained a sub-lieutenancy in a regiment which was stationed at Grenoble. Before his departure, he came to live some time with us : My sister was at a convent, but she came frequently home during the period of her vacation. I recollect that the day when he first *put on his uniform*, he was as joyous as young men generally are on such an occasion ; but his boots gave a singularly ridiculous appearance to his figure : they were of such enormous dimensions, that his little legs quite disappeared within them. Everybody knows that nothing has so quick an eye for the ridiculous as childhood ; so the moment that my sister and I saw him come into the room with these enormous boots, we burst out into immoderate fits of laughter. Then, as subsequently, he could not endure pleasantry, when he was its object. My sister, who was considerably older than I, answered, that as he had girded on his sword, he should consider himself as the Chevalier of Dames, and be highly flattered by their joking with him.

" 'It is easy to see,' said Napoleon with a haughty air, 'that you are a little miss just let loose from school.'

"My sister was then thirteen years old : it may easily be imagined how such an expression hurt her. She was of a very gentle disposition,—but neither she nor any other woman, whatever her age or disposition may be, can bear a direct insult to her vanity—that of Cecile was keenly offended at the expression of 'little miss escaped from school.'

" 'And you,' said she, 'are nothing but a PUSS IN BOOTS.'

"Every one burst out a-laughing : the stroke had told most effectually. I cannot describe the wrath of Napoleon ; he answered nothing, and it was as well he did not. My mother thought the epithet so well applied, that she laughed with all her heart. Napoleon, though little accustomed at that time to the usage of the world, had a mind too fine, too strong an instinctive perception, not to see that it was necessary to be silent when his adversary was a woman, and personalities were dealt in : whatever her age was, she was entitled to respect. At least, such was *then* the code of politeness in

those who dined at table. Now that utility and personal interest alone are the order of the day, the consumption of time in such pieces of politeness is complained of; and every one grudges the sacrifices necessary to carry into the world his little contingent of sociability.

“Bonaparte, though grievously piqued at the unfortunate epithet applied to him by my sister, affected to disregard it, and began to laugh like the rest; and to prove that he bore her no ill-will on that account, he bought a little present, on which was engraved a Puss in Boots, running before the carriage of the Marquis of Carabus. This present cost him a good deal, which assorted ill with the straitened state of his finances. He added a beautiful edition of ‘Puss in Boots,’ for my sister, telling her that it was a *Souvenir* which he begged her to keep for his sake.

“‘The story-book,’ said my mother, ‘is too much: if there had only been the engraving, it was all well; but the book for Cecile shows you were piqued against her.’

“He gave his word to the contrary. But I still think with my mother, that he was piqued, and bitterly so: the whole story was of no small service to me at a future time, as will appear in the sequel of these memoirs.”—
Vol. i. 52–53.

Several interesting anecdotes are preserved of the Reign of Terror, singularly characteristic of the horrors of that eventful period. The following picture is evidently drawn from the life:—

“On the following day, my brother Albert was obliged to remain a considerable time at home, to put in order the papers which my father had directed to be burnt. He went out at three o’clock to see us: he found on the road groups of men in a state of horrible and bloody drunkenness. Many were naked down to the waist; their arms, their breasts, bathed in blood. At the end of their pikes they bore fragments of clothes and bloody remnants: their looks were haggard; their eyes inflamed. As he advanced, these groups became more frequent and hideous. My brother, mortally alarmed as to our fate, and determined at all hazards to rejoin us, pushed on his horse along the Boulevard where he then was, and arrived in front of the palace Beaumarchais. There he was arrested by an immense crowd, composed of the same naked and bloody men, but with an expression of countenance altogether infernal. They set up hideous cries: they sang, they danced; the Saturnalia of Hell were before him. No sooner did they see the cabriolet of Albert than they set up still louder cries: An Aristocrat! an Aristocrat! and in a moment the cabriolet was surrounded by a raging multitude, in the midst of which an object was elevated and presented to his view. Troubled as the sight of my brother was, he could distinguish long white hair, clotted with blood, and a face beautiful even in death. The figure is brought nearer, and its lips placed on his. The unhappy wretch set up a frightful cry. He knew the head: it was that of the Princess Lamballe.

“The coachman whipped the horse with all his strength; and the generous animal, with that aversion for blood which characterises its race, rushed from that spectacle of horror with redoubled speed. The frightful trophy was overturned, with the cannibals who bore it, by the wheels of the carriage, and a thousand imprecations followed my brother, who lay stretched out insensible in the bottom of the cabriolet.

“Serious consequences resulted to my brother from that scene of horror. He was taken to a physician, where he was soon taken seriously ill of a burning fever. In his delirium the frightful figure was ever present to his imagination. He never ceased, for days together, to see that livid head and

those fair tresses bathed in blood. For years after, he could not recall the recollection of that horrible event without falling into a swoon, nor think of those days of woe without the most vivid emotion.

“A singular circumstance concluded this tale of horror. My brother, in 1802, when Commissary-General of Police at Marseilles, received secret instructions to watch, with peculiar care, over a man named Raymonet, but whose real name was different. He lived in a small cottage on the banks of the sea; appeared in comfortable circumstances, but had no relation nor friend; he lived alone in his solitary cabin, and received every morning his provisions from an old woman, who brought them to his gate. The secret instructions of the Police revealed the fact that this person had been one of the principal assassins at the Abbaye and La Force in September 1792, and was in an especial manner noted as the most cruel of the assassins of the Princess Lamballe.

“One morning my brother received intelligence that this man was at the point of death; and, gracious God! what a death! For three days he had endured all the torments of hell. The accident which had befallen him was perfectly natural in its origin, but it had made him suffer the most excruciating pains. He was alone in his habitation; he was obliged to drag himself to the nearest surgeon to obtain assistance, but it was too late: an operation was impossible, and would not even have assuaged the pains of the dying wretch. He refused alike religious succour and words of consolation. His deathbed was a chair of torture incomparably more agonising than the martyrdom of a Christian. He died with blasphemies in his mouth, like the Reprobate in Dante’s *Inferno*.”—Vol. i. 95.

The French, who have gone through the Revolution, frequently complain that there are no descriptions given in any historical works which convey the least idea of the Reign of Terror; so infinitely did the reality of that dreadful period exceed all that description can convey of the terrible. There might, however, we are persuaded, be extracted from the contemporary Memoirs (for in no other quarter can the materials be found) a picture of that memorable era, which would exceed all that Shakspeare or Dante had figured of human atrocity, and take its place beside the plague in Thucydides, and the annals of Tacitus, as a lasting beacon to the human race of the unheard-of horrors following in the train of democratic ascendancy.

One of the most curious parts of the Duchess’s work is that which relates to the arrest of Napoleon after the fall of Robespierre, in consequence of the suspicions that attached to him, from his mission to Genoa with the brother of that tyrant. It appears that, whatever he may have become afterwards, Napoleon was at that period an ardent republican: not probably because the principles of democracy were suited to his inclinations, but because he saw in the favour of that faction, then the ruling power in France, the only means of gratifying his ambition. Salicetti, one of the

deputies from Corsica, occasioned his arrest after the fall of Robespierre, and he was actually a few days in custody. Subsequently, Salicetti himself was denounced by the Convention, and concealed in the house of Madame Permon, mother to the Duchess of Abrantes. The whole details which follow this event are highly interesting; and as they afford one of the few really generous traits of Napoleon's character, we willingly give them a place.

"The retreat of Salicetti in our house was admirably contrived. His little cabinet was so stuffed with cushions and tapestry that the smallest sound could not be heard. No one could have imagined where he was concealed.

"On the following morning, at eleven o'clock, Napoleon arrived. He was dressed in his usual costume; a grey great-coat, buttoned up to the throat,—a black neckcloth,—round hat, which came down over the eyes. To say the truth, at that period no one was elegantly dressed, and the personal appearance of Napoleon did not appear so singular as it now does, upon looking back to the period. He had in his hand a bouquet of violets, which he presented to my mother. That piece of gallantry was so unusual to him that we immediately began to laugh. 'It appears,' said he, 'I am not *au fait* at my new duties of Cavaliere Servente.' Then changing the subject, he added, 'Well, Madame Permon, Salicetti has, in his turn, reaped the bitter fruits of arrest. They must be the more difficult to swallow, that he and his associates have planted the trees on which they grow.' 'What!' said my mother, with an air of surprise, and making a sign to me at the same time to shut the door, 'is Salicetti arrested?' 'Do you not know,' replied Napoleon, 'that his arrest was yesterday decreed at the Assembly? I thought you knew it so well that he was concealed in your house.' 'In my house,' replied my mother, with a well-feigned air of surprise; 'Napoleon, my dear child, you are mad! In my house! That implies that I have one, which unfortunately is not the case. My dear General, I beg you will not repeat such nonsense. What have I done to entitle you thus to sport with me as if I were deranged, for I can call it nothing else?'

"At these words Napoleon rose up; he crossed his arms, advanced immediately opposite to my mother, where he stood for some time without saying a word. My mother bore, without flinching, his piercing look, and did not so much as drop her eyelid under that eagle's eye. 'Madame Permon,' said he at length, 'Salicetti is concealed in your house: nay, do not interrupt me. I do not know it for certain, but I have no doubt of it, because yesterday at five o'clock he was seen on the Boulevard, coming in this direction, after he had received intelligence of the decree of the Assembly. He has no friend in this quarter who would risk life and liberty to save him but yourself; there can be no doubt, therefore, where he is concealed.'

"This long harangue gave my mother time to regain her assurance. 'What title could Salicetti have to demand an asylum from me? He knows that our sentiments are not the same. I was on the point of setting out; and had it not been for an accidental letter from my husband, I would have been now far advanced on my road to Gascony.'

"'What title had he to seek an asylum in your house?' replied Napoleon: 'that is the justest observation you have yet made, Madame Permon. To take refuge with a lonely woman, who might be compromised for a few hours of concealment to a proscribed culprit, is an act that no one else would be capable of. You are indeed his debtor; are you not, Mademoiselle Lou-

lou?' said he, turning to me, who had hitherto remained silent in the window.

"I feigned to be engaged with flowerpots in a window, where there were several bushes of arbutus, and did not answer him. My mother, who understood my motive, said to me, 'General Bonaparte speaks to you, my dear.' I then turned to him; the remains of my trouble might show him what had passed in the mind of a girl of fifteen, who was compelled, in spite of herself, to do an unpolite thing. He took my hand, pressed it between his two, and, turning to my mother, exclaimed, 'I ask your pardon; I have been in the wrong; your daughter has given me a lesson.' 'You give Laurette more merit than she really has,' replied my mother. 'She has not given you a lesson, because she does not know wherefore she should do so; but I will do so immediately, if you persist in believing a thing which has no foundation, but might do me irreparable mischief if it were spread abroad.'

"Bonaparte said, with a voice full of emotion, 'Madame Permon, you are an uncommonly generous woman, and that man is a wicked man. You could not have closed your door upon him, and he knew it; and yet you expose yourself and that child for such a man. Formerly I hated him; now I despise him. He has done me a great deal of harm; yes, he has done me a great deal of harm, and you know it. He has had the malice to take advantage of his momentary ascendancy to strive to sink me below the water. He has accused me of crimes; for what crime can be so great as to be a traitor to your country? Salicetti conducted himself in that affair of loans, and my arrest, like a miserable wretch. Junot was going to have killed him, if I had not prevented him. That young man, full of fire and friendship for me, was anxious to have fought him in single combat; he declared that if he would not fight, he would have thrown him over the window. Now he is proscribed; Salicetti, in his turn, can now appreciate the full extent of what it is to have one's destiny shattered, ruined by an accusation.'

"'Napoleon,' said my mother, stretching out her hand to him, 'Salicetti is not here. I swear he is not. And must I tell you all?' 'Tell it; tell it,' said he with extreme impatience. 'Well; Salicetti was here yesterday at six o'clock, but he went out at half-past eight. I convinced him of the impossibility of his remaining concealed in furnished lodgings. He admitted it, and went away.'

"While my mother spoke, the eyes of Napoleon continued fixed upon her with an eagerness of which it is impossible to convey an idea. Immediately after, he moved aside, and walked rapidly through the chamber. 'I was right then, after all,' he exclaimed. 'He had then the cowardice to say to a generous woman, Give your life for me. But did he who thus contrived to interest you in his fate, tell you that he had just assassinated one of his colleagues? Did he wash his hands before he touched yours to implore mercy?'

"'Napoleon, Napoleon!' exclaimed my mother in Italian, and with great emotion, 'this is too much. Be silent, or I must be gone. If they have murdered this man after he left me, at least it is no fault of mine.' Napoleon at this time was not less moved. He sought about everywhere, like a hound after its prey. He constantly listened to hear him, but could hear nothing. My mother was in despair. Salicetti heard everything. A single plank separated him from us; and I, in my inexperience, trembled lest he should issue from his retreat, and betray us all. At length, after a fruitless search of two hours, he rose and went away. It was full time; my mother was worn out with mortal disquietude. 'A thousand thanks,' said he, as he left the room; 'and above all, Madame Permon, forgive me. But if you had ever been injured as I have been by that man! Adieu!'"—
Vol. i. 147, 148.

A few days after, Madame Permon set out for Gascony, with Salicetti, disguised as a footman, seated behind the carriage. Hardly had they arrived at the first post, when a man arrived on horseback with a letter for Madame Permon. They were all in despair, conceiving they were discovered; but, upon opening it, their apprehensions were dispelled. It was from Bonaparte, who had received certain intelligence from his servant that Salicetti, his mortal enemy, was in the carriage with her, and had been concealed in her house. He had learned it from his servant, who became acquainted with it from Madame Permon's maid, who, though faithful to misfortune, could not conceal the secret from love. It was in the following terms:—

“I never wished to pass for a hypocrite. I would be so, if I did not declare that for more than twenty days I have known for certain that Salicetti was concealed in your house. Recollect my words on the 1st Prairial; I was then almost sure of it, now I know it beyond a doubt. Salicetti, you see I could repay you the injury you have done me; in doing so, I should only have requited the evil which you did to me, whilst you gratuitously injured one who had never offended you. Which is the nobler part at this moment—yours or mine? I have it in my power to revenge myself, but I will not do it. Perhaps you will say that your benefactress serves as your shield, and I own that that consideration is powerful. But though you were alone, unarmed, and proscribed, your head would be safe from my hands. Go; seek in peace an asylum where you may become animated with nobler sentiments towards your country. My mouth is closed on your name, and will never open more on that subject. Repent, and appreciate my motives. I deserve it, for they are noble and generous.—Madame Permon—My warmest wishes attend you and your daughter. You are two helpless beings, without defence. May Providence, and the prayers of a friend, be ever with you! Be prudent, and do not stop in the great towns. Adieu! receive my kindest regards.—N. BONAPARTE.”—Vol. i. 160.

We regard this letter, and the previous transaction to which it refers, if it shall be deemed by those intimately acquainted with the parties as perfectly authentic, as by far the most important trait in the character of Napoleon, during his early life, which has yet appeared. It demonstrates that at that period, at least, his heart was accessible to generous sentiments, and that he was capable of performing a noble action. Admitting that he was, in some degree, swayed in this proceeding by his regard for Madame Permon, who appears to have been a woman of great attractions, and for whom, as we shall presently see, he conceived warmer feelings than those of mere friendship, still it is not an ordinary character, and still less not an ordinary Italian character, which from such motives would forego the fiendish

luxury of revenge. This trait, therefore, demonstrates that Napoleon's character originally was not destitute of generosity; and the more charitable, and probably the more just, inference is, that the selfishness and egotism by which he was afterwards so strongly characterised, arose from that uninterrupted and extraordinary flow of prosperity which befell him, and which experience everywhere proves is more fatal to generosity, or interest in others, than anything else that can befall man here below.

Of the voyage along the charming banks of the Garonne, from Bordeaux to Toulouse, our authoress gives the following just and interesting account:—

“That mind must be really disquieted or in suffering, which does not derive the highest pleasure from the voyage by water from Bordeaux to Toulouse. I have since seen the shores of the Arno, those of the Po, the Tagus, and the Brenta; I have seen the Arno in its thundering cascade, and in its placid waters: all traverse fertile plains, and exhibit ravishing points of view; but none of them recall the magical illusion of the voyage from Bordeaux to Toulouse. Marmande, Agen, Langon, La Reole,—all those towns whose names are associated with our most interesting recollections,—are there associated with natural scenery prodigal of beauty, and illuminated by a resplendent sun and a pure atmosphere. I can conceive nothing more beautiful than those enchanted banks from Reole to Agen. Groups of trees, Gothic towers, old castles, venerable steeples, which then, alas! no longer called the Catholics to prayer. Alas! at that time even the bells were absent: they no longer called the faithful to the house of God. Everything was sad and deserted around that antique porch. The grass was growing between the stones of the tombs in the nave; and the shepherd was afar off, preaching the word of God in distant lands, while his flock, deprived of the Bread of Life, beheld their infants springing up around them without more religious instruction than the savages of the desert.”—Vol. i. 166.

The fact here mentioned of the total want of religious instruction in France, is by far the most serious consequence which has followed the tempests of the Revolution. The thread of religious instruction from parent to child has, for the first time since the introduction of Christianity in the western world, been broken over the whole of France. A whole generation has not only been born, but educated and bred up to manhood, without any other religious impressions than what they received from the traditions of their parents. Lavalette has recorded, that during the campaigns of Napoleon in Italy, the soldiers never once entered a church, and looked upon the ceremonies of the Catholics in the same way as they would have done on the superstitions of Hindostan or Mexico. So utterly ignorant were they of the elements

even of religious knowledge, that when they crossed from Egypt into Syria, they knew not that they were near the places celebrated in Holy Writ; they drank without consciousness at the fountains of Moses, wound without emotion round the foot of Mount Sinai, and quartered at Bethlehem and on Mount Carmel, ignorant alike of the cradle of Christianity, or of the glorious efforts of their ancestors in those scenes to regain possession of the Holy Sepulchre.

What the ultimate consequences of this universal and unparalleled break in religious instruction must be, it is not difficult to foretell. The restoration of the Christian worship by Napoleon, the efforts of the Bourbons during fifteen years to restore its sway, have proved in a great degree nugatory. Christianity, reappearing in the garb of political power, has lost its original and destined hold of the people; it is regarded by all the ardent and impetuous part of the nation as a mere collection of antiquated prejudices or nursery tales, adopted by Government for political purposes, and fitted only to enslave and fetter the human mind. The consequence has been, a universal emancipation of the nation, in towns at least, from the fetters of religion,—a dissoluteness of manners pervading the middle and lower orders to a degree unparalleled in modern Europe,—and a universal inclination in the higher to adopt selfish maxims in life, and act alone from motives of individual interest and elevation. This is the great feature of modern society in France,—the distinguishing characteristic which is alike deplored by their writers, and observed by the strangers who visit their country. They are fast descending into the selfishness and egotism which, in ancient times, were the invariable forerunners of political decline. This character has become incapable of sustaining genuine freedom; from the fountains of selfishness its noble streams never yet flowed. The tempests of Democracy will for a time agitate France, because the people will long strive to shake off the restraints of government and religion, in order that no fetters may be imposed on their passions; when they have discovered, as they will soon do, that this leads only to universal suffering, they will sink down quietly and for ever under the shadow of Despotism. And this will be the consequence and the punishment of their abandon-

ment of that which constitutes the sole basis of lasting or general freedom—the Christian religion and private virtue.

One of the convulsions attended with the least suffering in the whole course of the Revolution, was the 13th Vendemiaire, 1795, when Napoleon, at the head of the troops of the Convention, 5000 strong, defeated 40,000 of the National Guard of Paris, on the very ground at the Tuileries which was rendered famous, thirty-five years after, by the overthrow of Charles X. and the dynasty of the Bourbons. The following description, however, conveys a lively picture of what civil war is, even in its least horrible forms :—

“ During some hours, we flattered ourselves that matters would be arranged between the National Guards and the Convention ; but suddenly at half-past four the cannon began to discharge. Hardly was the first report heard, when the reply began on all sides. The effect was immediate and terrible on my poor father ; he uttered a piercing cry, and, calling for succour, was soon seized with a violent delirium. In vain we gave him the soothing draughts which had been prescribed by M. Duchesnois. All the terrific scenes of the Revolution passed before his eyes, and every new discharge which was heard pierced him to the heart. What a day ! what a night ! Our windows were broken in pieces ; towards the evening the Sections retired, and they fought under our eyes ; but when they came to the church of St Roch, and the Theatre of the Republic, it seemed as if the house would fall to pieces.

“ My father was in agony ; he cried, he wept. Never shall I forget the horrors of that dreadful night. Our terrors rose to the highest pitch, when we heard that barricades were erected in the Rue de la Loi. Every hour of that dreadful night was to me like the hour of the damned, of which Father Bridagne speaks, *Toujours jamais*. I loved my father with the sincerest affection, and I adored my mother. I saw the one dying with the discharges of cannon, which resounded in his ears, while the other, stretched at the foot of that bed of death, seemed ready to follow him. There are some recollections which are eternal ; never will the remembrance of that dreadful night, and of those two days, be effaced from my memory ; they are engraven on my mind with a burning iron.”—Vol. i. p. 190.

Salicetti fell ill in their house, from anxiety on account of the fate of Romme and his accomplices, who were brought to trial for a conspiracy to restore the Reign of Terror. The picture she gives of his state of mind when on the bed of sickness, is finely descriptive of the whirl of agony which infidelity and democracy produce.

“ We had soon a new torment to undergo ; Salicetti fell ill. Nothing can equal the horrors of his situation ; he was in a high fever, and delirious ; but what he said, what he saw, exceeds anything that can be conceived. I have read many romances which portrayed a similar situation. Alas ! how their description falls short of the truth ! Never have I read anything

which approached it—Salicetti had no religion; that added to the horrors of these dreadful scenes. He did not utter complaints; blasphemies were eternally poured forth. The death of Romme and his friends produced the most terrible effect on his mind; their tragic fate was incessantly present to his thoughts. One, in particular, seemed never to quit his bedside; he spoke to him, he listened, he answered; the dialogues between them, for he answered for his dead friend, were enough to turn our brains. Sometimes he fancied himself in a chamber red with blood. But what caused me more terror than all the rest, was the low and modulated tone of his voice during his delirium; it would appear that terror had mastered all his other faculties, even the acutest sufferings. No words can convey an idea of the horror inspired by that pale and attenuated man, uttering, on a bed of death, blasphemies and anathemas in a voice modulated and subdued by terror. I am at a loss to convey the impression of what I felt, for, though so vividly engraven on my memory, I know not how to give it a name.”—Vol. i. p. 156.

Nothing can be more instructive than to follow the irreligious and the Jacobins to their latter end. How desperately do these men of blood then quail under the prospect of the calamities they have inflicted on others; how terribly does the evil they have committed return on their own heads; how infinitely does the scene, drawn from the life, exceed all that the imagination of Dante could conceive of the terrible!

It is well known what a dreadful famine prevailed in Paris for some time after the suppression of the revolt of the 13th Vendemiaire. Our authoress supplies us with several anecdotes, highly characteristic of the period, and which place Bonaparte's character in a very favourable light.

“At that period famine prevailed in Paris, with more severity than anywhere else in France; the people were literally suffering under the want of bread; the other necessities of life were not less deficient. What an epoch! Great God! the misery was frightful: the depreciation of the assignats went on augmenting with the public suffering: the poor, totally without work, died in their hovels, or, issuing forth in desperation, joined the robbers, who infested all the roads in the country.

“Bonaparte was then of great service to us. We had white bread for our own consumption; but our servants had only the black bread of the Sections, which was unwholesome and hardly eatable. Bonaparte sent us every day some rolls of bread, which he came to eat with us with the greatest satisfaction. At that period, I can affirm with confidence, since he associated me in his acts of beneficence, that Napoleon saved the lives of above a hundred families. He made domiciliary distributions of bread and wood, which his situation as military commander enabled him to do. I was intrusted with the distribution of these gifts of wood and bread to ten families, who were dying of famine. The greater part of them lodged in the Rue St Nicholas, close to our house. That street was inhabited at that time by the poorest class. No one who has not ascended one of its crowded stairs, has an idea of what real misery is.

“One day Bonaparte, coming to dine at my mother's, was stopped in

alighting from his carriage by a woman, who bore the dead body of an infant in her arms. It was the youngest of six children. Misery and famine had dried up her milk. Her little child had just died—it was not yet cold. Seeing every day an officer with a splendid uniform alight at our house, she came to beg bread from him, ‘in order,’ as she expressed it, ‘that her other infants should not share the fate of the youngest; and if I get nothing, I will take the whole five, and we will throw ourselves together into the river.’”

“This was no vain threat on the part of that unhappy woman, for at that period suicides succeeded each other every day. Nothing was talked of but the tragic end of some family. Bonaparte entered the room with an expression of melancholy, which did not leave him during the whole of dinner. He had at the moment given a few assignats to that unhappy woman; but after we arose from table, he begged my mother to make some inquiries concerning her. She did so, and found that her story was all true, and that she was of good character. Napoleon paid her the wages due to her deceased husband by the Government, and got for her a small pension. She succeeded in bringing up her children, who ever after retained the most lively sense of gratitude towards ‘the General,’ as they called their benefactor.”—Vol. i. 195.

The Duchess gives a striking picture of the difference in the fashions and habits of living which has resulted from the Revolution. Being on a subject where a woman’s observations are more likely to be accurate than those of a man, we willingly give a place to her observations.

“Transported from Corsica to Paris at the close of the reign of Louis XV., my mother had imbibed a second nature in the midst of the luxuries and excellencies of that period. We flatter ourselves that we have gained much by our changes in that particular; but we are quite wrong. Forty thousand livres a-year fifty years ago would have commanded more luxury than two hundred thousand now. The elegancies that at that period surrounded a woman of fashion cannot be numbered; a profusion of luxuries were in common use, of which even the name is now forgotten. The furniture of her sleeping apartment—the bath in daily use—the ample folds of silk and velvet which covered the windows—the perfumes which filled the room—the rich laces and dresses which adorned the wardrobe, were widely different from the ephemeral and insufficient articles by which they have been replaced. My opinion is daily receiving confirmation; for everything belonging to the last age is daily coming again into fashion, and I hope soon to see totally expelled all those fashions of Greece and Rome, which did admirably well under the climate of Rome or Messina, but are ill adapted for our *vent du bize* and cloudy atmosphere. A piece of muslin suspended on a gilt rod, is really of no other use but to let a spectator see that he is behind the curtain. It is the same with the imitation tapestry—the walls six inches thick, which neither keep out the heat in summer, nor the cold in winter. All the other parts of modern dress and furniture are comprised in my anathema, and will always continue to be so.

“It is said that everything is simplified, and brought down to the reach of the most moderate fortunes. That is true in one sense; that is to say, our confectioner has muslin curtains and gilt rods at his windows, and his wife has a silk cloak as well as ourselves, because it is become so thin that it is indeed accessible to every one, but it keeps no one warm. It is the same with all the other stuffs. We must not deceive ourselves; we have gained nothing by all these changes. Do not say, ‘So much the better, this is equality.’ By no means; equality is not to be found here, any more than

it is in England, or America, or anywhere, since it cannot exist. The consequence of attempting it is, that you will have bad silks, bad satins, bad velvets ; and that is all.

"The throne of fashion has encountered, during the Revolution, another throne, and it has been shattered in consequence. The large and soft arm-chairs, the full and ample draperies, the cushions of eider down, all the other delicacies which we alone understood of all the European family, led only to the imprisonment of their possessors ; and if you had the misfortune to inhabit a spacious hotel, within a court, to avoid the odious noise and smells of the street, you had your throat cut. That mode of treating elegant manners put them out of fashion ; they were speedily abandoned, and the barbarity of their successors still so lingers amongst us, that every day you see put into the lumber-room an elegant Grecian chair which has broken your arm, and canopies which smell of the stable, because they are stuffed with hay.

"I scold because I am growing old. If I saw that the world was going the way it should, I would say nothing, and would perhaps adopt the custom of our politicians, which is to embrace the last revolution with alacrity, whatever it may be. See how comfortable this is, say our young men, who espouse the cause of the last easy chair which their upholsterer has made for them, as of the last of the thirteen or fifteen constitutions which have been manufactured for them during the last forty years. I will follow their example ; I will applaud everything, even the new government of Louis-Philippe ; though, it must be confessed, that to do so requires a strong disposition to see everything in the most favourable colours."—Vol. i. 197, 198.

The authoress apologises frequently for these and similar passages, containing details on the manners, habits, and fashions during the period in which she lived ; but no excuse is required for their insertion. Details of ball dresses, saloons, operas, and theatres, may appear extremely trifling to those who have only to cross the street to witness them ; but they become very different when they are read after the lapse of centuries, and the accession of a totally different set of manners. They are the materials from which alone a graphic and interesting history of the period can be framed. What would we give for details of this sort on the era of Cæsar and Pompey ! With what eagerness do we turn to the faithful pages of Froissart and Monstrelet for similar information concerning the chivalrous ages ; and with what delight do we read the glowing pictures in *Ivanhoe* and the *Crusaders*, in *Quentin Durward* and *Kenilworth*, composed from the materials thus afforded, of the manners, customs, and habits of those periods ! To all appearance, the world is changing so rapidly under the pressure of the revolutionary tempest, that, before the lapse of many generations, the habits of our times will be as much the object of research to the antiquary, and of interest to the historian, as those

of Richard Cœur-de-Lion or the Black Prince are to our age.

We have mentioned above, that Napoleon's interest in Madame Permon appeared to have been stronger than that of mere friendship. The following passage contains the account of a declaration and refusal, which never probably before were equalled since the beginning of the world :—

“ Napoleon came one day to my mother, a considerable time after the death of my father, and proposed a marriage between his sister Pauline and my brother Permon. ‘ Permon has some fortune,’ said he ; ‘ my sister has nothing : but I am in a situation to do much for my connexions, and I could procure an advantageous place for her husband. That alliance would render me happy. You know how beautiful my sister is : My mother is your friend : Come, say yes, and all will be settled.’

“ My mother answered, that her son must answer for himself ; and that she would make no attempt to influence his choice.

“ Bonaparte admitted that my brother was a young man so remarkable, that, though he was only twenty-five years of age, he had judgment and talents adequate to any situation. What Bonaparte proposed was extremely natural. He contemplated a marriage between a girl of sixteen and a young man of twenty-five, who had £500 a-year, with a handsome exterior ; who drew as well as his master, Vernet ; played on the harp much better than his master, Kromphultz ; spoke English, Italian, and modern Greek, as well as a native, and had such talents as had made his official duties in the army of the south a matter of remark. Such was the person whom Napoleon asked for his sister ; a ravishing beauty and good daughter, it is true ; but that was all.

“ To this proposal Napoleon added another ; that of a union between myself and Joseph or Jerome. ‘ Jerome is younger than Laurette,’ said my mother, laughing. ‘ In truth, my dear Napoleon, you have become a high-priest to-day ; you must needs marry all the world, even children.’ Bonaparte laughed also, but with an embarrassed air. He admitted that that morning, in rising, a gale of marriage had blown over him ; ‘ and to prove it,’ said he, taking the hand of my mother, and kissing it, ‘ I am resolved to commence the union of our families by asking you to marry myself as soon as the forms of society will permit.’

“ My mother has frequently told me that extraordinary scene, which I know as if I had been present at it. She looked at Bonaparte for some seconds with an astonishment bordering on stupefaction ; then she began to laugh so immoderately that we all heard it, though we were in the next room.

“ Napoleon was highly offended at the mode in which a proposal, which appeared to him perfectly natural, was received. My mother, who perceived what he felt, hastened to explain herself, and to show that it was at the thoughts of the ridiculous figure which she herself would make in such an event that she was so much amused. ‘ My dear Napoleon,’ said she, when she had done laughing, ‘ let us speak seriously. You imagine you know my age, but you really do not : I will not tell you, for I have a slight weakness in that respect : I will only say, I am old enough, not only to be your mother, but the mother of Joseph. Let us put an end to this pleasantry ; it grieves me when coming from you.’

“ Bonaparte told her that he was quite serious ; that the age of his wife was to him a matter of no importance, provided she had not the look, like her, of being above thirty years old ; that he had deliberately considered

what he had just said; and he added these remarkable words:—‘I wish to marry. My friends wish me to marry a lady of the Fauxbourg St Germain, who is charming and agreeable. My old friends are averse to this connexion, and the one I now propose suits me better in many respects. Reflect.’ My mother interrupted the conversation by saying, that her mind was made up as to herself; and that as to her son, she would give him an answer in a day or two. She gave him her hand at parting, and said, smiling, that, though she had not entirely given up the idea of conquests, she could not go just so far as to think of subduing a heart of six-and-twenty; and that she hoped their friendship would not be disturbed by this little incident. ‘But at all events,’ said Napoleon, ‘consider it well.’—‘Well, I will consider it,’ said she, smiling in her sweetest manner, and so they parted.

“After I was married to Junot, and he heard it, he declared that it appeared less surprising to him than it did to us. Bonaparte, at the epoch of the 13th Vendemiaire, was attached to the war committee: his projects, his plans, all had one object, and that was the East. My mother’s name of Comnene, with her Grecian descent, had a great interest in his imagination. The name of Calomeros, united with Comnene, might have powerfully served his ambition in that quarter. ‘The great secret of all these marriages,’ said Junot, ‘was in that idea.’ I believe he was right.”—Vol. i. pp. 202, 203.

All the proposed marriages came to nothing; the Duchess’s brother refused Pauline, and she herself Joseph. They little thought that the one was refusing the throne of Charlemagne, the other that of Charles V., and the third, the most beautiful princess in Europe.

The following picture of three of the most celebrated women in the Revolution, one of whom eminently contributed by her influence to the fall of Robespierre, shows that the fair author is not less a master of the subjects more peculiarly belonging to her sex.

“Madame D. arrived late in the ball-room. The great saloon was completely filled. Madame D., who was well accustomed to such situations, looked around her to see if she could discover a seat, when her eyes were arrested by the figure of a young and charming person, with a profusion of light tresses, looking around her with her fine blue eyes, with a timid air, and offering the most perfect image of a young sylph. She was in the act of being led to her seat by M. de Trenis, which showed that she was a beautiful dancer; for he honoured no one with his hand but those who might receive the title of *la belle danseuse*. The young lady, after having bowed blushing to the Vestris of the room, sat down beside a lady who had the appearance of being her elder sister, and whose extremely elegant dress was attracting the attention of all around her. ‘Who are these ladies?’ said Madame D. to the Count de Haulefort, on whose arm she was leaning. ‘Do you not know the Viscountess Beauharnais and her daughter Hortense?’

“‘My God!’ said the Count, ‘who is that beautiful woman?’ who at that moment entered the room, and towards whom all eyes were immediately turned. That lady was of a stature above the ordinary; but the perfect harmony in her proportions prevented you from perceiving that she was above the ordinary size. It was the Venus of the Capitol, but more beautiful than the work of Phidias. You saw the same perfection in the arms, neck, and feet, and the whole figure animated by an expression of benevolence, which told at once, that all that beauty was but the magic

reflection of a mind animated only by the most benevolent and generous feelings. Her dress had no share in contributing to her beauty ; for it was a simple robe of Indian muslin arranged in drapery like the antique, and held together on the shoulders by two splendid cameos ; a girdle of gold, which encircled her figure, was elegantly clasped in the same way ; a large golden bracelet ornamented her arm ; her hair, black and luxuriant, was dressed without tresses, *a la Titus* ; over her white and beautiful shoulders was thrown a superb shawl of red cachemire, a dress at that period extremely rare, and highly in request. It was thrown round her in the most elegant and picturesque manner, forming thus a picture of the most ravishing beauty. It was Madame Tallien, so well known for her generous efforts at the time of the fall of Robespierre."—Vol. i. 222.

This description suggests one observation, which must strike every one who is at all familiar with the numerous French female memoirs which have issued from the Parisian press within these few years. This is the extraordinary accuracy with which, at any distance of time, they seem to have the power of recalling, not only the whole particulars of a ball-room or opera, but even the dresses worn by the ladies on these occasions. Thus the ball here described took place in 1797. Yet the Duchess has no sort of difficulty in recounting the whole particulars both of the people and dresses in 1830, three-and-thirty years after. We doubt extremely whether any woman in England could give as accurate an account within a month after the event. Nor does there seem to be any ground for the obvious remark, that these descriptions are all got up *ex post facto*, without any foundation in real life ; for the variety and accuracy with which they are given evidently demonstrates that, however much the colours may have been subsequently added, the outlines of the sketch were taken from nature. As little is there any ground for the suspicion, that the attention of the French women is exclusively occupied with these matters, to the exclusion of more serious considerations ; for these pages are full of able and sometimes profound remarks on politics, events, and characters, such as would have done credit to the clearest head in Britain. We can only suppose that the vanity which, amidst many excellences, is the undoubted characteristic both of the men and women in France, is the cause of this extraordinary power in their female writers, and that the same disposition which induces their statesmen and heroes to record daily the victories of their diplomacy and arms, leads their lively and intelligent ladies to commit to paper all that is particularly

remarkable in private life ; among which, they do not forget the dresses which aid them in their ball-room conquests.

Some interesting details are preserved, as to the reception of Napoleon in Paris by the Directory after the Revolution of the 18th Fructidor. The following quotations exhibit the talent of the author, both for the lighter and more serious subjects of narrative, in the best light :—

“ Junot entered at first into the famous battalion of volunteers of the Côté d’or. After the surrender of Longwy they were moved to Toulon ; it was the most terrific period of the Revolution. Junot was then a sergeant of grenadiers, an honour which he received from the voluntary election of his comrades on the field of battle. Often, in recounting to me the first years of his adventurous life, he has declared that nothing ever gave him such a delirium of joy, as when his comrades, all, he said, as brave as himself, named him sergeant on the field of battle, and he was elevated on a seat formed of crossed bayonets, still reeking with the blood of their enemies.”

It was at that time that, being one day, during the siege of Toulon, at his post at a battery, an officer of artillery, who had recently come from Paris to direct the operations of the siege, asked from the officer who commanded the post for a young non-commissioned officer who had at once intelligence and boldness. The officer immediately called for Junot ; the officer surveyed him with that eye which already began to take the measure of human capacity.

“ ‘ You will change your dress,’ said the commander, ‘ and you will go there to bear this order.’ He showed him with his hand a spot at a distance on the same side. The young sergeant blushed up to the eyes ; his eyes kindled with fire. ‘ I am not a spy,’ said he, ‘ to execute their orders ; seek another to bear them.’—‘ Do you refuse to obey ?’ said the superior officer ; ‘ do you know to what punishment you expose yourself in so doing ?’—‘ I am ready to obey,’ said Junot ; ‘ but I will go in my uniform, or not at all.’ The commander smiled, and looked at him attentively. ‘ But if you do, they will kill you.’—‘ What does that signify ?’ said Junot ; ‘ you know me little to imagine I would be pained at such an occurrence, and, as for me, it is all one. Come, I go as I am ; is it not so ?’ And he set off singing.

“ After he was gone, the superior officer asked, ‘ What is the name of that young man ?’ ‘ Junot,’ replied the other. The commanding officer then wrote his name in his pocket-book. ‘ He will make his way,’ he replied. This judgment was already of decisive importance to Junot, for the reader must readily have divined that the officer of artillery was Napoleon.

“ A few days after, being on his rounds at the same battery, Bonaparte asked for some one who could write well. Junot stepped out of the ranks and presented himself. Bonaparte recognised him as the sergeant who had already fixed his attention. He expressed his satisfaction at seeing him, and desired him to place himself so as to write under his dictation. Hardly was the letter done, when a bomb, projected from the English batteries, fell

at the distance of ten yards, and, exploding, covered all present with gravel and dust. 'Well,' said Junot laughing, 'we shall at least not require sand to dry the ink.'

"Bonaparte fixed his eyes on the young sergeant; he was calm, and had not even quivered at the explosion. That event decided his fortune. He remained attached to the commander of artillery, and returned no more to his corps. At a subsequent time, when the town surrendered, and Bonaparte was appointed General, Junot asked no other recompense for his brave conduct during the siege, but to be named his aide-de-camp. He and Muiron were the first who served him in that capacity."—Vol. i. 268.

A singular incident, which is stated as having happened to Junot at the battle of Lonato, in Italy, is recorded in the following curious manner :—

"The evening before the battle of Lonato, Junot having been on horseback all the day, and ridden above twenty leagues in carrying the orders of the General-in-Chief, lay down overwhelmed with fatigue, without undressing, and ready to start up at the smallest signal. Hardly was he asleep, when he dreamed he was on a field of battle, surrounded by the dead and the dying. Before him was a horseman clad in armour, with whom he was engaged; that cavalier, instead of a lance, was armed with a scythe, with which he struck Junot several blows, particularly one on the left temple. The combat was long, and at length they seized each other by the middle. In the struggle the vizor, the casque of the horseman, fell off, and Junot perceived that he was fighting with a skeleton; soon the armour fell off, and Death stood before him armed with his scythe. 'I have not been able to take you,' said he, 'but I will seize one of your best friends.—Beware of me!'

"Junot awoke, bathed with sweat. The morning was beginning to dawn, and he could not sleep from the impression he had received. He felt convinced that one of his brother aide-de-camps, Muiron or Marmont, would be slain in the approaching fight. In effect it was so: Junot received two wounds—one on the left temple, which he bore to his grave, and the other on the breast; but Muiron was shot through the heart."—Vol. i. 270.

The two last volumes of this interesting work, published a few weeks ago, are hardly equal, in point of importance, to those which contained the earlier history of Napoleon, but still they abound with interesting and curious details. The following picture of the religion which grew up in France on the ruins of Christianity is singularly instructive :—

"It is well known, that during the revolutionary troubles of France, not only all the churches were closed, but the Catholic and Protestant worship was entirely forbidden; and, after the Constitution of 1795, it was at the hazard of one's life that either the mass was heard, or any religious duty performed. It is evident that Robespierre, who unquestionably had a design which is now generally understood, was desirous, on the day of the fête of the Supreme Being, to bring back public opinion to the worship of the Deity. Eight months before, we had seen the Bishop of Paris, accompanied by his clergy, appear voluntarily at the bar of the Convention to abjure the Christian faith and the Catholic religion. But it is not as generally known, that at that period Robespierre was not omnipotent, and could not carry his

desires into effect. Numerous factions then disputed with him the supreme authority. It was not till the end of 1793, and the beginning of 1794, that his power was so completely established that he could venture to act up to his intentions.

“Robespierre was then desirous to establish the worship of the Supreme Being, and the belief of the immortality of the soul. He felt that irreligion is the soul of anarchy, and it was not anarchy but despotism which he desired; and yet the very day after that magnificent fête in honour of the Supreme Being, a man of the highest celebrity in science, and as distinguished for virtue and probity as philosophic genius, Lavoisier, was led out to the scaffold. On the day following that, Madame Elizabeth, that princess whom the executioners could not guillotine till they had turned aside their eyes from the sight of her angelic visage, stained the same axe with her blood!—And, a month after, Robespierre, who wished to restore order for his own purposes—who wished to still the bloody waves which, for years, had inundated the state, felt that all his efforts would be in vain if the masses who supported his power were not restrained and directed, because, without order, nothing but ravages and destruction can prevail. To insure the government of the masses, it was indispensable that morality, religion, and belief should be established—and, to affect the multitude, that religion should be clothed in external forms. ‘My friend,’ said Voltaire to the atheist Damilaville, ‘after you have supped on well-dressed partridges, drank your sparkling champagne, and slept on cushions of down in the arms of your mistress, I have no fear of you, though you do not believe in God.—But if you are perishing of hunger, and I meet you in the corner of a wood, I would rather dispense with your company.’ But when Robespierre wished to bring back to something like discipline the crew of the vessel which was fast driving on the breakers, he found the thing was not so easy as he imagined. To destroy is easy—to rebuild is the difficulty. He was omnipotent to do evil; but the day that he gave the first sign of a disposition to return to order, the hands which he himself had stained with blood marked his forehead with the fatal sign of destruction.”—Vol. vi. 34, 35.

After the fall of Robespierre, a feeble attempt was made, under the Directory, to establish a religious system founded on pure Deism. To the faithful believer in Revelation, it is interesting to trace the rise and fall of the first attempt, in the history of the world, to establish such a faith as the basis of national religion.

“Under the Directory, that brief and deplorable government, a new sect established itself in France. Its system was rather morality than religion; it affected the utmost tolerance, recognised all religions, and had no other faith than a belief in God. Its votaries were termed the Theophilanthropists. It was during the year 1797 that this sect arose. I was once tempted to go to one of their meetings. Lareveilliere Lepaux, chief grand priest and protector of the sect, was to deliver a discourse. The first thing that struck me in the place of assembly, was a basket filled with the most magnificent flowers of July, which was then the season, and another loaded with the most splendid fruits. Every one knows the grand altar of the church of St Nicholas in the Fields, with its rich Corinthian frieze. I suspect the Theophilanthropists had chosen that church on that account for the theatre of their exploits, in a spirit of religious coquetry. In truth, their basket of flowers produced an admirable effect on that altar of the finest Grecian form, and mingled in perfect harmony with the figures of angels which adorned the walls. The chief pronounced a discourse, in which he

spoke so well, that, in truth, if the Gospel had not said the same things infinitely better some 1797 years before, it would have been decidedly preferable either to the Paganism of antiquity, or the mythology of Egypt or India.

“Napoleon had the strongest prejudice against that sect. ‘They are comedians,’ said he. And when some one replied that nothing could be more admirable than the conduct of some of their chiefs, that Lareveilliere Lepaux was one of the most virtuous men in Paris; in fine, that their morality consisted in nothing but virtue, good faith, and charity, he replied—

“‘To what purpose is all that? Every system of morality is admirable. Apart from certain dogmas, more or less absurd, which were necessary to bring them down to the level of the age in which they were produced, what do you see in the morality of the Vedas, the Koran, the Old Testament, or Confucius? Everywhere a pure system of morality; that is to say, you see protection to the weak, respect to the laws, gratitude to God, recommended and enforced. But the Evangelists alone exhibit the union of all the principles of morality, detached from every kind of absurdity. There is something admirable, and not your common-place sentiments put into bad verse. Do you wish to see what is sublime, you and your friends the Theophilanthropists? *Repeat the Lord’s Prayer.* Your zealots,’ added he, addressing a young enthusiast in that system, ‘are desirous of the palm of martyrdom, but I will not give it them; nothing shall fall on them but strokes of ridicule, and I little know the French if they do not prove mortal.’ In truth, the result proved how well he had appreciated the French character. It perished after an ephemeral existence of five years, and left not a trace behind but a few verses, preserved as a relic of that age of mental aberration.”—Vol. vi. 40, 43.

This passage is very remarkable. Here we have the greatest intellect of the age, Napoleon himself, recurring to the Gospel, and to the Lord’s Prayer, as the only pure system of religion, and the sublimest effort of human composition; and Robespierre, endeavouring, in the close of his bloody career, to cement anew the fabric of society, which he had had so large a share in destroying, by a recurrence to religious impressions! So indispensable is devotion to the human heart; so necessary is it to the construction of the first elements of society, and so well may you distinguish the spirit of anarchy and revolution, by the irreligious tendency which invariably attends it, and prepares the overthrow of every national institution, by sapping the foundation of every private virtue.

The arrest of the British residents over all France, on the rupture of the Peace of Amiens, was one of the most cruel and unjustifiable acts of Napoleon’s government. The following scene between Junot and the First Consul on this subject is singularly characteristic of the impetuous fits of passion to which this great man was subject, and which

occasionally betrayed him into actions so unworthy of his general character :—

“ One morning, at five o'clock, when day was just beginning to break, an order arrived from the First Consul to repair instantly to Malmaison. Junot had been labouring till four in the morning, and had but just fallen asleep. He set off instantly, and did not return till five in the evening. When he entered he was in great agitation ; his meeting with him had been stormy, and the conversation long.

“ When Junot arrived at the First Consul's, he found his figure in disorder ; his features were contracted ; and everything announced one of those terrible agitations which made every one who approached him tremble.

“ ‘ Junot,’ said he to his old aide-de-camp, ‘ are you still the friend on whom I can rely ? Yes or no. No circumlocution.’

“ ‘ Yes, my general.’

“ ‘ Well then, before an hour is over, you must take measures instantly, so that *all the English*, without one single exception, should be instantly arrested. Room enough for them will be found in the Temple, the Force, the Abbaye, and the other prisons of Paris ; it is indispensable that they should *all* be arrested. We must teach their government, that intrenched though they are in their isle, they can be reached by an enemy who is under no obligation to treat their subjects with any delicacy. The wretches,’ said he, striking his fist violently on the table, ‘ they refuse Malta, and assign as a reason’——Here his anger choked his voice, and he was some time in recovering himself. ‘ They assign as a reason, that Lucien has influenced, by my desire, the determinations of the court of Spain, in regard to a reform of the clergy ; and they refuse to execute the Treaty of Amiens, on pretence that, since it was signed, the situation of the contracting parties had changed.’

“ Junot was overwhelmed ; but the cause of his consternation was not the rupture with England. It had been foreseen and known for several days. But in the letters which were now handed to him, he perceived a motive to authorise the terrible measures which Napoleon had commanded. He would willingly have given him his life, but now he was required to do a thing to the last degree repugnant to the liberal principles in which he had been trained.

“ The First Consul waited for some time for an answer ; but seeing the attitude of Junot, he proceeded, after a pause of some minutes, as if the answer had already been given.

“ ‘ That measure must be executed at seven o'clock this evening. I am resolved that, this evening, not the most obscure theatre at Paris, not the most miserable restaurateur, should contain an Englishman within its walls.’

“ ‘ My General,’ replied Junot, who had now recovered his composure, ‘ you know not only my attachment to your person, but my devotion in everything which regards yourself. Believe me, then, it is nothing but that devotion which makes me hesitate in obeying you, before entreating you to take a few hours to reflect on the measure which you have commanded me to adopt.’

“ Napoleon contracted his eyebrows. ‘ Again !’ said he. ‘ What ! is the scene of the other day so soon to be renewed ? Lannes and you truly give yourselves extraordinary license. Duroc alone, with his tranquil air, does not think himself entitled to preach sermons to me. You shall find, gentlemen, by God ! that I can square my hat as well as any man ; Lannes has already experienced it ; and I do not think he will enjoy much his eating of oranges at Lisbon. As for you, Junot, do not rely too much on my friendship. The day on which I doubt of yours, mine is destroyed.’

“ ‘ My General,’ replied Junot, profoundly afflicted at being so much misunderstood, ‘ it is not at the moment that I am giving you the strongest

proof of my devotion, that you should thus address me. Ask my blood, ask my life, they belong to you, and shall be freely rendered ; but to order me to do a thing which will cover us all with——'

" 'Go on,' he interrupted, 'go on by all means. What will happen to me because I retaliate on a perfidious government the injuries which it has heaped upon me?'

" 'It does not belong to me,' replied Junot, 'to decide upon what line of conduct is suitable to you. Of this, however, I am well assured, that if anything unworthy of your glory is attempted, it will be from your eyes being fascinated by the men who only disquiet you by their advice, and incessantly urge you to measures of severity. Believe me, my General, these men do you infinite mischief.'

" 'Whom do you mean?' said Napoleon.

" Junot mentioned the names of several, and stated what he knew of them.

" 'Nevertheless, these men are devoted to me,' replied he. 'One of them said the other day—If the First Consul were to desire me to kill my father, I would kill him.'

" 'I know not, my General,' replied Junot, 'what degree of attachment to you it is, to suppose you capable of giving an order to a son to put to death his own father. But it matters not ; when one is so unfortunate as to think in that manner, they seldom make it public.'

" Two years afterwards, the First Consul, who was then Emperor, spoke to me of that scene, after my return from Portugal, and told me that he was on the point of embracing Junot at these words ; so much was he struck with these noble expressions addressed to him, his general, his chief, the man on whom alone his destiny depended. 'For in fine,' said the Emperor smiling, 'I must own I am rather unreasonable when I am angry ; and that you know, Madame Junot.'

" As for my husband, the conversation which he had with the First Consul was of the warmest description. He went the length of reminding him, that at the departure of the ambassador, Lord Whitworth, the most solemn assurances had been given him of the safety of all the English at Paris. 'There are,' said he, 'amongst them, women, children, and old men ; there are numbers, my General, who night and morning pray to God to prolong your days. They are for the most part persons engaged in trade ; for almost all the higher classes of that nation have left Paris. The damage they would sustain from being all imprisoned is immense. Oh, my General ! it is not for you, whose noble and generous mind so well comprehends whatever is grand in the creation, to confound a generous nation with a perfidious cabinet.'"—Vol. vi. 406-410.

With the utmost difficulty, Junot prevailed on Napoleon to commute the original order, which had been for immediate imprisonment, into one for the confinement of the unfortunate British subjects in particular towns, where it is well known most of them lingered till delivered by the Allies in 1814. But Napoleon never forgave this interference with his wrath ; and, shortly after, Junot was removed from the government of Paris, and sent into honourable exile to superintend the formation of a corps of grenadiers at Arras.

The great change which has taken place in the national character of France since the Restoration, has been noticed

by all writers on the subject. The Duchess of Abrantes' observations on the subject are highly curious.

"Down to the year 1800, the national character had undergone no material alteration. That character overcame all perils, disregarded all dangers, and even laughed at death itself. It was this calm in the victims of the Revolution which gave the executioners their principal advantage. A friend of my acquaintance, who accidentally found himself surrounded by the crowd who were returning from witnessing the execution of Madame du Barri, heard two of the women in the street speaking to each other on the subject, and one said to the other, 'How that one cried out! If they all cry out in that manner, I will not return again to the executions.' What a volume of reflections arise from these few words, spoken with all the unconcern of those barbarous days!

"The three years of the Revolution following the 1793, taught us to weep, but did not teach us to cease to laugh. They laughed under the axe yet stained with blood; they laughed as the victim slept at Venice under the burning irons which were to break his dreams. Alas! how deep must have been the wounds which have changed this lightsome character! For the joyous Frenchman laughs no more; and if he still has some happy days, the sun of *gaiety* has set for ever. This change has taken place during the fifteen years which have followed the Restoration; while the horrors of the wars of religion, the tyrannical reigns of Louis XI. and XIV., and even the bloody days of the Convention, produced no such effect."—Vol. v. 142.

Like all the other writers on the modern state of France, of whatever school or party in politics, Madam Junot is horrified at the deterioration of manners, and increased vulgarity, which has arisen from the democratic invasions of later times. Listen to the ardent supporter of the revolutionary order of things, on this subject:—

"At that time (1801) the habits of good company were not yet extinct in Paris; of the *old* company of France, and not of what is *now* termed good company, and which prevailed thirty years ago only among postilions and stable-boys. At that period, men of good birth *did not smoke in the apartments of their wives*, because they felt it to be a dirty and disgusting practice; they *generally washed their hands*; when they went out to dine, or to pass the evening in a house of their acquaintance, they *bowed to the lady at its head on entering and retiring*, and did not appear so abstracted in their thoughts as to behave as they would have done in an hotel. They were then careful *not to turn their back on those with whom they conversed*, so as to show only an ear or the point of a nose to those whom they addressed. They spoke of something else besides those eternal politics on which no two can ever agree, and which give occasion only to the interchange of bitter expressions. There has sprung from these endless disputes, disunion in families, the dissolution of the oldest friendships, and the growth of hatred which will continue till the grave. Experience proves that in these contests no one is ever convinced, and that each goes away more than ever persuaded of the truth of his own opinions.

"The customs of the world now give me nothing but pain. From the

bosom of the retirement where I have been secluded for these fifteen years, I can judge, without prepossession, of the extraordinary revolution in manners which has lately taken place. Old impressions are replaced, it is said, by new ones; that is all. Are, then, the new ones superior? I cannot believe it. Morality itself is rapidly undergoing dissolution—every character is contaminated, and no one knows from whence the poison is inhaled. Young men now lounge away their evenings in the box of a theatre, or the Boulevards, or carry on elegant conversation with the fair seller of gloves and perfumery, make compliments on her lily and vermilion cheeks, and present her with a *cheap* ring, accompanied with a gross and indelicate compliment. Society is so disunited, that it is daily becoming more vulgar, in the literal sense of the word. Whence any improvement is to arise, God only knows.”
—Vol. v. 156, 157.

We expect, if the present system of democracy continues long in France, to see the vulgarity of American manners introduced into the French capital; to behold gentlemen sitting with their feet upon the backs of chairs in the saloons of the Faubourg St Germain, and each member of the Chamber of Deputies chewing tobacco, with all its hideous accompaniments, under the splendid roof of the Legislative Hall. Fortunately, such evils will lead to their ultimate remedy. The dissolution of morals and manners will overthrow the existing institutions of the country; anarchy and licentiousness, with all its debasing accompaniments, will cease; and if liberty perishes with the grossness to which it has given birth, and ages of despotism are endured, the friends of order will at least have the consolation of reflecting, that all this degradation and ruin have been brought about against their most strenuous exertions, by the insane passions of those who invoked its name to cover their own excesses.

While we are concluding these observations, another bloody revolt has occurred at Paris; the three glorious days of June have come to crown the work, and develop the consequences of the three glorious days of July. After a desperate struggle, maintained with much greater resolution and vigour on the part of the insurgents than the insurrection which proved fatal to Charles X.; after Paris having been the theatre, for three days, of bloodshed and devastation; after 75,000 men had been engaged against the Revolutionists; after the thunder of artillery had broken down the Republican barricades, and a tempest of grape-shot had laid low the ranks of the citizen-soldiers, the military

force triumphed, and peace was restored to the trembling city. What has been the consequence? All the forms of law have been suspended; military commissions established; domiciliary visits become universal; several thousand persons thrown into prison; and, before this, the *fusillades* of the new heroes of the Barricades have announced to a suffering country that the punishment of their sins has commenced. The liberty of the press is destroyed, the editors delivered over to military commissions, the printing presses of the Opposition journals thrown into the Seine, and all attempts at insurrection, or words tending to excite it, and *all offences of the press tending to excite dissatisfaction or revolt*, handed over to military commissions, composed exclusively of officers! This is the freedom which the three glorious days have procured for France!

The soldiers were desperately chagrined and mortified at the result of the three days of July; and well they might be so, as all the subsequent sufferings of their country, and the total extinction of their liberties on the last occasion, were owing to their vacillation in the first revolt. They have now fought with the utmost fury against the people, as they did at Lyons, and French blood has amply stained their bayonets; but it has come too late to wash out the stain of their former treason, or revive the liberties which it lost for their country.

Polignac is now completely justified for all but the incapacity of commencing a change of the constitution with five thousand men, four pieces of cannon, and eight rounds of grape-shot to support it. The ordinances of Charles X., now adopted with increased severity by Louis Philippe, were destined to accomplish, *without bloodshed*, that change which the fury of democracy rendered necessary, and without which it has been found the Throne of the Barricades cannot exist. It is evident that the French do not know what freedom is. They had it under the Bourbons, as our people had it under the old constitution; but it would not content them, because it was not liberty, but power,—not freedom, but democracy,—not exemption from tyranny, but the power of tyrannising over others,—that they desired.

They gained their point—they accomplished their wishes ; and the consequence has been, two years of suffering, followed by military despotism. We always predicted the three glorious days would lead to this result ; but the termination of the drama has come more rapidly than the history of the first Revolution led us to anticipate.

PARTITION OF THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS

[BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, DECEMBER 1832]*

It is related by Bourrienne, that it was during the visit of Napoleon to the shores of the ocean, by order of the Directory, in February 1798, to prepare for the invasion of England, that he first was struck with the vast importance of Antwerp as a naval station to effect that great object of Gallic ambition. The impression then made was never afterwards effaced; his eagle eye at once discerned that it was from that point that the army destined to conquer England must sail. Its secure and protected situation, guarded alike by powerful fortresses, and an intricate and dangerous inland navigation; its position at the mouth of the Scheldt, the great artery of the Flemish provinces of the Empire; its proximity on the one hand to the military resources of France, and on the other to the naval arsenals of the United Provinces; its near neighbourhood to the Thames and the Medway, the centre of the power of England and the most vulnerable point of its empire, all pointed it out as the great central depot where the armament for the subjugation of this country was to be assembled, as the advanced work of French ambition against English independence. No sooner had he seized the reins of power than he turned his attention to the strengthening of this important station. All the resources of art, all the wealth of the imperial treasury, were lavished upon its fortification; rampart after rampart, bastion after bastion, surrounded its ample harbour; docks capable of holding the whole navy of

* Written during the siege of the citadel of Antwerp by the combined French and English forces.

France were excavated ; and the greatest fleet which ever menaced England was assembled within its walls. Before the fall of his power, thirty-five ships of the line were safely moored under its cannon ; he held to it with tenacious grasp under all the vicissitudes of his fortune ; and when the Allies approached its walls, he sent the ablest and firmest of the republicans, Carnot, to prolong even to the last extremity its means of defence. “ If the Allies were encamped,” said he in the Legislative Body, on the 31st March 1813, “ on the heights of Montmartre, I would not surrender one village in the thirty-second military division.” Though hard pressed in the centre of his dominions, he still clung to this important bulwark. When the Old Guard was maintaining a desperate struggle in the plains of Champagne, he drafted not a man from the fortifications of the Scheldt ; and when the conqueror was struck to the earth, his right hand still held the citadel of Antwerp.

In all former times, and centuries before the labour of Napoleon had added so immensely to its importance, the Scheldt had been the centre of the most important preparations for the invasion of England, and the spot on which military genius always fixed from whence to prepare a descent on this island. An immense expedition, rendered futile by the weakness and vacillation of the French Monarch, was assembled in it in the fourteenth century ; and sixty thousand men on the shore of the Scheldt awaited only the signal of Charles VI.* to set sail for the shore of Kent. The greatest naval victory ever gained by the English arms was that at Sluys, in 1340, when Philip of France lost 30,000 men and 230 ships of war in an engagement off the Flemish coast with Edward III.,† a triumph greater, though less noticed in history, than either that of Cressy or Poitiers. When the great Duke of Parma was commissioned by Philip II. of Spain to take steps for the invasion of England, he assembled the forces of the Low Countries at Antwerp ; and the Spanish Armada, had it proved successful, was to have wafted over that great commander from the banks of the Scheldt to the opposite shore of Essex, at the head of the veterans who had been trained in the Dutch war. In an evil hour, Charles II., bought by French gold, and seduced by

* *Sismond's Hist. de France*, xi. 387.

† *Hume*, ii. 230.

French mistresses, entered into an alliance with Louis XIV. for the coercion of Holland ; the Lilies and the Leopards, the navies of France and England, assembled together at Spithead, and made sail for the French coast, while the armies of the Grande Monarque advanced across the Rhine into the heart of the United Provinces. The consequence was such a prodigious addition to the power of France, as it took all the blood and treasure expended in the war of the Succession and all the victories of Marlborough to reduce to a scale at all consistent with the independence of the other European states. Mr Pitt, how adverse soever to engage in a contest with republican France, was driven to it by the advance of the tricolor standard to the Scheldt, and the evident danger which threatened English independence from the possession of its fortresses by the French armies ; and the event soon proved the wisdom of his foresight. The surrender of the Low Countries, arising from the insane demolition of its fortresses by the Emperor Joseph, soon brought the French armies to Amsterdam ; twenty years of bloody and destructive war, the slaughter of millions, and the contraction of eight hundred millions of debt by this country, followed the victorious march of the French armies to the banks of the Scheldt ; while seventeen years of unbroken rest, a glorious peace, and the establishment of the liberties of Europe upon a firm basis, immediately succeeded their expulsion from them by the arms of Wellington.

Before these sheets issue from the press, an English and French fleet will have sailed from the British shores to co-operate with a French army IN RESTORING ANTWERP TO FRANCE. The tricolor flag has floated alongside of the British pendant ; the shores of Spithead, which never saw a French fleet but as prizes, have witnessed the portentous coalition, and the unconquered citadels of England thundered with salutes to the enemies who fled before them at Trafalgar ! Antwerp, with its dockyards and its arsenals ; Antwerp, with its citadel and its fortifications ; Antwerp, the outpost and stronghold of France against English independence, is to be purchased by British blood for French ambition ! Holland, the old and faithful ally of England ; Holland, which has stood by us in good and evil fortune for one

hundred and fifty years; Holland, the bulwark of Europe, in every age, against Gallic aggression, is to be partitioned and sacrificed in order to plant the standards of a revolutionary power on the shores of the Scheldt! Deeply has England already drunk, deeper still is she destined to drink, of the cup of national humiliation, for the madness of the last two years.

Disgraceful as these proceedings are to the national honour and integrity of England; far as they have lowered its ancient flag beneath the degradation it ever reached in the darkest days of national disaster, their *impolicy* is, if possible, still more conspicuous. Flanders, originally the instructor, has in every age been the rival of England in manufactures; Holland, being entirely a commercial state, and depending for its existence upon the carrying trade, has in every age been her friend. The interest of these different states has led to this opposite policy, and must continue to do so, until a total revolution in the channels of commerce takes place. Flanders, abounding with coal, with capital, with great cities, and a numerous and skilful body of artisans, has, from the earliest dawn of European history, been conspicuous for her manufactures; Holland, without any advantages for the fabricating of articles, but with immense ones for their transport, has, from the establishment of Dutch independence, been the great carrier of Europe. She feels no jealousy of English manufactures, because she has none to compete with them; she feels the greatest disposition to receive the English goods, because all those which are sent to her add to the riches of the United Provinces. Belgium, on the other hand, is governed by a body of manufacturers, who are imbued with a full proportion of that jealousy of foreign competition which is so characteristic in all countries thus occupied. Hence, the Flemish ports have always been as rigorously closed as the Dutch were liberally opened to British manufactures; and, at this moment, not only are the duties on the importation of British goods greatly higher in Flanders than they are in Holland, but the recent policy of the former country has been as much to increase, as that of the other has been to lower its import burdens. Since the Belgian Revolution, the duties on all the staple commodities of England—coal,

woollens, and cotton cloths—have been *lowered* by the Dutch government; but the fervour of their revolutionary gratitude has led to no such measure on the part of the Belgians.

This difference in the policy of the two states being founded on their habits, interests, and physical situation, must continue permanently to distinguish them. Dynasties may rise or fall; but as long as Flanders, with its great coal mines, cotton mills, and iron founderies, is the rival of England in those departments of industry in which she most excels, it is in vain to expect that any cordial reception of British manufactures is to take place within her provinces. The iron forgers of Liege, the woollen manufacturers or cotton operatives of Ghent or Bruges, will never consent to the free importation of the cutlery of Birmingham, the woollen cloths of Yorkshire, the muslins of Glasgow, or the cotton goods of Manchester. But no such jealousy is, or ever will be, felt by the merchants of Amsterdam, the carriers of Rotterdam, or the shipmasters of Flushing. Flanders always has been, and always will desire to be, incorporated with France, in order that her manufactures may feel the vivifying influence of the great home market of that populous country; Holland always has been, and always will desire to be, in alliance with England, in order that her commerce may experience the benefit of a close connexion with the great centre of the foreign trade of the world.

Every one practically acquainted with these matters, knows that Holland is at this moment almost the only inlet which Continental jealousy will admit for British manufactures to the continent of Europe. The merchants of London know whether they can obtain a ready vent for their manufactures in the ports of France or the harbours of Flanders. The export trade to France is inconsiderable; that to Flanders trifling; but that to Holland is immense. It takes off £2,000,000 worth of our exports, and employs 350,000 tons of shipping, about a *seventh* of the whole shipping of Great Britain. Were it not for the facilities to British importation afforded by the commercial interests of the Dutch, our manufactures would be wellnigh excluded from the continent of Europe. The Scheldt, when guarded

by French batteries, and studded with republican sails, may become the great artery of European, but unquestionably it will not be of English commerce. The great docks of Antwerp may be amply filled with the tricolor flag; but they will see but few of the British pendants. In allying ourselves with the Belgians, we are seeking to gain the friendship of our natural rivals, and to strengthen what will soon become a province of our hereditary enemies; in alienating the Dutch, we are losing our long-established customers, and weakening the state which, in every age, has been felt to be the outwork of British independence.

But it is not the ruinous consequences of this monstrous coalition of the two great Revolutionary Powers of Europe against the liberty and independence of the smaller states which are chiefly to be deplored. It is the shameful *injustice* of the proceeding, the profligate disregard of treaties which it involves, the open abandonment of national honour which it proclaims, which constitute its worst features. We have not yet lived so long under popular rule as to have become *habituated* to the principles of iniquity; to have been accustomed, as in revolutionary France, to have spoliation palliated on the footing of expedience, and robbery justified by the weakness of its victim. We have not yet learned to measure political actions by their success; to praise conquest to the skies when it is on the side of revolution, and load patriotism with obloquy when it is exerted in defence of regulated freedom. We are confident that the British seamen under any circumstances will do their duty, and we do not see how Holland can resist the fearful odds which are brought against her; but recollecting that there is a moral government of nations, that there is a God who governs the world, and that the sins of the fathers, in nations as well as individuals, will be visited upon the children, we tremble to think of its consequences, and conscientiously believe that such a triumph may ultimately prove a blacker day for England, than if the army of Wellington had been dispersed in the forest of Soignies, or the fleet of Nelson swallowed up in the waves of Trafalgar.

What is chiefly astonishing, and renders it painfully apparent that revolutionary ambition has produced its usual

effect in confounding and undermining all the moral feelings of mankind in this country, is the perfect indifference with which the *partition of Holland* is regarded by all the Movement Party, as contrasted with the unmeasured lamentations with which they have made the world resound for the *partition of Poland*. Yet if the matter be impartially considered, it will be found that our conduct in leaguings with France for the partition of the Netherlands, has been *much more infamous* than that of the Continental potentates was in the subjugation of Poland. The slightest historical retrospect must place this in the clearest light.

Poland was of old, and for centuries before her fall, the standing enemy of Russia. Twice the Polish armies penetrated to the heart of her empire, and the march of Napoleon to the Kremlin had been anticipated five centuries before by the arms of the Jagellons. Austria had been delivered from Turkish invasion by John Sobieski, but neither that power nor Prussia were bound to guarantee the integrity of the Polish dominions, nor had they ever been in alliance with it for any length of time. The instability of Polish policy arising from the democratic state of its government, the perpetual vacillation of its councils, and the weakness and inefficiency of its external conduct, had for centuries been such that no lengthened or sustained operation could be expected from its forces. It remained in the midst of the military monarchies a monument of democratic madness, a prey to the most frightful internal anarchy, and unable to resist the most inconsiderable external aggression. Its situation and discord rendered it the natural prey of its more vigorous and efficient military neighbours. In combining for its partition, they effected what will ultimately prove, as Lord Brougham long ago observed,* the most beneficial change for the ultimate happiness of its people, by forcibly repressing their democratical passions, and turning its wild but heroic spirit into the channels of regulated and useful patriotism. In dividing Poland, the three powers incurred the guilt of robbers who plunder a caravan, which, from internal divisions, is unable to defend itself; Austria was guilty of black ingratitude in

* *Colonial Policy.*

assailing her former deliverer; but Russia violated no oaths, broke no engagements, committed no treachery; she never owed anything to Poland; she was her enemy from first to last, and conquered her as such. We attempt no vindication of this aggression; it was the work of ruthless violence, alike to be stigmatised in a monarchical as in a republican power.

But what shall we say to the partition of the Netherlands, effected by France and England at a time of profound peace, when its dominions were guaranteed by both these powers, and it had done nothing to provoke the hostility of either? Can it be denied that we, in common with all the Allied Powers, guaranteed to the King of the Netherlands his newly created dominions? The treaty of 1815 exists to disprove the assertion. Has Holland done any injury to Great Britain or France to justify their hostility? Has she laid an embargo on their ships, imprisoned their subjects, or confiscated their property? Confessedly she has done none of these things. Has she abandoned us in distress, or failed to succour us, as by treaty bound, in danger? History proves the reverse: for a hundred and fifty years she has fought by our side against our common enemies; she has shared alike in the disasters of Lafelt and Fontenoy, and in the triumphs of Ramillies and Oudenarde, of Malplaquet and Waterloo. Has she injured the private or public interests of either of the powers who now assail her? Has she invaded their provinces, or laid siege to their fortresses, or blockaded their harbours? The idea of Holland, with her 2,500,000 souls, attempting any of these things against two nations who count above fifty millions of inhabitants in their dominions, is as ridiculous as it would be to suppose an infant in its nurse's arms to make war on a mounted dragoon of five-and-twenty. What, then, has she done to provoke the partition of the lords of the earth and the ocean? She has resisted the march of revolution, and refused to surrender her fortresses to revolutionary robbery; and therein, and *therein alone*, she has offended.

But this is not all. Unprincipled as such conduct would have been, if it had been the whole for which this country had to blush, it is *but a part* of the share which England

and France have taken in this deplorable transaction. These powers were not only allies of the King of the Netherlands; they had not only solemnly guaranteed the integrity of his dominions, but they had accepted, with the other Allied Powers, the office of *mediators and arbiters* between him and his revolted subjects; and they have now united to *spoliate the party who made the reference*. To the violence of an ordinary robber, they have superadded the abandonment of a friend and partiality on the part of a judge. It is this lamentable *combination* of unprincipled qualities, which makes our conduct in this transaction the darkest blot on our annals, and will ultimately render the present era one for which posterity will have as much cause to blush as when John surrendered his dominions to the Papal legate, or Charles gifted away to French mistresses the honour and the integrity of England.

The Revolution of the Three Glorious Days, which has, for the last two years, steeped France in misery and Paris in blood, having excited the revolutionary party in every part of Europe to unheard-of transports, Brussels, in order not to be behind the great centre of democracy, rose in revolt against its sovereign, and the King of the Netherlands was expelled from its walls. An attack of the Dutch troops, ill planned and worse executed, having been defeated, the King of the Netherlands applied to England to restore him by force to the throne which she had guaranteed. This took place in October 1830, when the Duke of Wellington was still in power.

To have interfered with the land and sea forces of England to restore the Dutch King to the throne of Belgium, would, at this juncture, have been highly perilous. It was doubtful whether we were bound to have afforded such aid,—the guarantee contained in the treaty of 1815 being rather intended to secure the dominions of the Netherlands against *foreign* aggression, than to bind the contracting parties to aid him in stifling domestic revolt. At all events, it was certain that such a proceeding would at once have roused the revolutionary party throughout Europe, and would have afforded France a pretext, of which she would instantly and gladly have availed herself, for interfering with her powerful armies in favour of

her friends among the Belgian Jacobins. The Duke of Wellington, therefore, judged wisely, and with the prudence of a practised statesman, when he declined to lend such aid to the dispossessed monarch, and tendered the good offices of the Allied Powers to mediate in *an amicable way* between the contending parties. The proffered mediation coming from such powers as Russia, Austria, Prussia, France, and England, could not possibly have been resisted by the Dutch States; and the offer of their good offices was too valuable to be declined. They agreed to the offer, and on this basis the London Conference assembled. This was the whole length that matters had gone, when the Duke of Wellington resigned in November 1830; and most unquestionably nothing was farther from the intentions of the British Ministry at that period, as the Duke of Wellington has repeatedly declared in Parliament, than to have acted in any respect without the concurrence of the other powers, or to have made this mediation a pretext for forcible partition of the Dutch dominions.

But with the accession of the Whigs to power commenced a different system. They at once showed, from their conduct, that they were actuated by that unaccountable partiality for France, which has ever since 1789 distinguished their party, and for which the great writers of revolutionary France have themselves not scrupled to censure Mr Fox and all his adherents. "The Opposition in England," says Madame de Stael, "with Mr Fox at their head, were entirely wrong in the opinion they formed regarding Buonaparte; and in consequence that party, formerly so much esteemed, entirely lost its ascendancy in Great Britain. It was *going far enough to have defended the French Revolution through the Reign of Terror*; but no fault could be greater than to consider Buonaparte as holding to the principles of the Revolution, of which he was the ablest destroyer."* The same blind admiration for revolutionary France, which Lord Grey had manifested from the outset of his career, was imbibed with increased ardour by his whole Administration, upon the breaking out of the Three Glorious Days; and the King of the Netherlands soon found, to his cost, that instead of an equitable and

* *Rév. Franç.*, ii. 270.

impartial arbitrator, he had got a ruthless and partial enemy at the Conference, in Great Britain.

The first measure in which this altered temper was publicly manifested, was by the permission of England to Leopold to accept the crown of Belgium. This at once dissevered and rendered irretrievable, without a general war, the separation of that country from Holland, because it established a *revolutionary interest*, and that, too, of the strongest kind, dependent on the maintenance of that separation. This step was a clear departure from the equity of an arbitrator and a judge, because it rendered final and irrevocable the separation which it was the object of the *mediation to heal*, and which, but for the establishment of that revolutionary interest, would speedily have been closed. In truth, the Belgians were, after a year's experience, so thoroughly disgusted with their revolution—they had suffered so dreadfully under the tyrants of their own choosing—starvation and misery had stalked in so frightful a manner through their populous and once happy streets—that they were rapidly becoming prepared to have returned under the mild government of the House of Orange, when this decisive step, by establishing a revolutionary interest on the throne, for ever blighted these opening prospects of returning tranquillity and peace.

But the matter did not rest here. France and England concluded a treaty in July 1831, eight months after the accession of the Whigs to office; a treaty by which they *guaranteed to Leopold his revolutionary dominions*, including that part of territory in which are situated Maestricht, the frontier fortress of *the old United Provinces*, and the noble fortress of Luxembourg; and they stipulated for the free navigation of the Scheldt. This outrageous step was utterly ruinous to Holland. The terms which it imposed on the King of the Netherlands, especially the surrender of Maestricht and Luxembourg, and the navigation of Dutch waters by the Belgians, were utterly destructive of that country. It was the same thing as if the free navigation of the Mersey and the Thames had been guaranteed to the manufacturers of France and Belgium. The guarantee of Limbourg and Luxembourg, including Maestricht, to Belgium was still more unpardonable, because Luxembourg was part

of the *old patrimony of the House of Nassau*; and Limbourg, with its barrier fortress Maestricht, was no part of Belgium, but of *Holland, properly so called*. Holland could not part with them, if she had the slightest regard to her future safety. After Maestricht, its old bulwark on the side of France, and Antwerp, its new bulwark on the side of Flanders, were lost, its independence was an empty name.

Determined to perish, rather than yield to such ruinous conditions, the King of the Netherlands declared war against the new King of Belgium, and then was seen what a slight hold the revolutionary party possessed of the Flemish people. The revolutionary rabble were defeated in two pitched battles; the fumes of the Belgian revolt were dissipated; counter movements were beginning in Ghent and the principal towns in the Netherlands; and Brussels was within half an hour of falling into the hands of its lawful monarch, when the armies of France and the fleet of England, yielding to the demand of Leopold, and bound by the guarantee contained in the Revolutionary Treaty, advanced to support the cause of revolution. The consequences might easily have been foreseen. The armies of Holland were checked in the mid career of victory, Brussels preserved for its cowardly revolutionary tyrants, and the ulcer of the Belgian revolt, when on the point of being closed, preserved open in the centre of Europe.

The King of the Netherlands gained something by this vigorous step. The French saw the utter worthlessness of their revolutionary allies; the crying injustice of demanding the cession of Maestricht and Luxembourg became too great even for the Governments of the mediating powers, and the protocols took a new direction. Antwerp, and a free navigation of the Dutch waters, became now the great object on which France and England insisted; though it involved, by transferring the trade of the United Provinces to the Belgian territory, serious eventual injury to Holland. That is the point which has since been insisted on; that is the object for which we are now to plunge into an iniquitous and oppressive war.

Shortly afterwards an event took place which, by drawing still closer the revolutionary bonds between France and

Belgium, developed still further the system of aggression to which England had, in an evil hour, lent the weight of her once venerated authority. Leopold married the daughter of Louis Philippe; and Flanders became in effect, as well as in form, a French province. This event might have been foreseen, and *was foreseen*, from the moment that he ascended the throne of that country. It was well known, in the higher classes in London, that Leopold had *more than once proposed to his present Queen, before the Belgian revolt*; that it was her disinclination to go to Greece which made him refuse the crown of that country; and that the moment he mounted the throne of Belgium, he would become the son-in-law of the King of France. All this was distinctly known: it was well understood that, if Antwerp was demanded for Belgium, it was in effect demanded for France, and that the establishment of the tricolor flag on the great arsenals and dockyards of that city, was the necessary result of making it a *sine qua non* of the pacification of the Netherlands. All this, we repeat, was thoroughly known before Leopold was counselled by our Administration to accept the throne of Belgium, or Antwerp was seriously insisted upon at the Conference; and it was in the full knowledge of that consequence that he was placed on that throne, and the cession of that great outwork against revolutionary France imperiously demanded by the French and English plenipotentiaries. And it is in the full knowledge that this effect *must follow*, that a war is now undertaken by England, the effect of which may be to throw Europe into conflagration, and the consequences of which no man can foresee.

And what is the present state of the Belgian question? The King of the Netherlands, like a worthy descendant of the House of Nassau, refuses to surrender Antwerp to the *single demand* of France and England; but agrees to submit all disputes regarding it to the joint arbitration of the *five Allied Powers*. The *five* powers were the umpires originally chosen; and the *five alone* have any legal or equitable title to interfere in the matter. But how stands the fact now? Have the five powers, whose united and balanced judgment was relied on by the parties to the arbitration—have they all combined in the measures of violence

against Holland? Quite the reverse. Austria, Russia, and Prussia have solemnly protested against such a measure, and its prosecution is likely to involve France and England in a desperate contest with these potentates. Who, then, insists on the spoliation? Revolutionary France and revolutionary England; revolutionary France, panting to regain the frontier of the Rhine, and secure the great fortified harbour of Antwerp, as an advanced post from whence to menace our independence; and revolutionary England following with submissive steps, like the Cisalpine or Batavian Republic, in the wake of the great parent democracy. And this is the first fruits of the government of the Whigs.

This puts in the clearest point of view the extravagant injustice of our present attack on Dutch independence. The mediation of the five powers was accepted; the five, taken jointly, have *alone* the power of fixing the award. Three hold out, and refuse to accede to the violent measures which are now proposed; but two, carried away by an adverse interest, one of them being the father-in-law of, the other also allied by marriage to, the party in whose favour they decide, insist upon instantaneous measures of spoliation. What title have *the two* to drop the pen and take up the sword, in order to enforce measures which the other three refuse to sanction? Who gave France and England, taken singly, any right to act as arbiters between Belgium and Holland? Who authorised the fleets and armies of the great democratic Powers to partition the dominions of the King of the Netherlands, and force him to give up what his revolted subjects have not been able to wrest from him? It will not do to say, they derived the power from the acquiescence of the King of the Netherlands in the forcible mediation of the Allied Powers; for what he acquiesced in, was the *pacific* arbitration of the five, and not the *hostile* intervention of the *two*. From what, then, do they derive their right? From the same title which Russia has to the partition of Poland—the right of the strongest; the title of a revolutionary state to extend and strengthen all the subordinate revolutionary dynasties with which in terror of a righteous retribution it has strengthened itself.

Setting aside, therefore, altogether the obvious and crying inexpedience of this war, which is to restore to France that

important naval station so threatening to England, which it took us so much blood and treasure to wrest from her in the last war ; setting aside the extreme impolicy of irritating and spoliating our best customers and oldest allies, in the hopeless idea of winning the favour of a fickle and jealous manufacturing rabble ; what we chiefly view with alarm is, the monstrous injustice and gross partiality of our conduct ; the total disregard of the faith of treaties and the obligations of centuries which it involves ; and the deplorable degradation to which it reduces England, in compelling her, instead of standing forward in the vanguard of Freedom, to follow as an obsequious vassal in the train of Gallic usurpation. Not if her fleets were sunk, or her armies defeated,—not if Portsmouth was in ashes or Woolwich in flames,—not if the Tower of London bore the flag of an enemy, and the tombs of Westminster Abbey were rifled by foreign bands, in defence of our liberties in a just cause, would we think so despondingly of our destinies, would we feel so humbled in our national feelings, as we do at thus witnessing the English pendant following the tricolor flag in a crusade against the liberty of nations. We have descended at once from the pinnacle of glory to the depths of humiliation ; from being foremost in the bands of freedom, to being last in the train of tyranny ; from leading the world against a despot in arms, to crouching at the feet of our vanquished enemy. That which a hundred defeats could not have done, a disgrace which the loss of a hundred sail of the line, or the storming of a hundred fortresses could not have induced upon *Old England*, has been voluntarily incurred by *New England*, to obtain the smiles of a revolutionary throne.

Suppose that La Vendée, which is not impossible, were to revolt against Louis Philippe, and by a sudden effort expel the troops of the French monarch from the west of France ; that the Allied Powers of Russia, Austria, and Prussia were then to interfere, and declare that the first shot fired by the Citizen King at his revolted subjects would be considered by them as a declaration of war against the Holy Alliance ; that, intimidated by such formidable neighbours, France were to agree to their mediation ; that immediately a monarch of the legitimate race were to be placed by the Allies, without the concurrence of Louis Philippe, on

the throne of Western France, and he were to be married with all due expedition to an Archduchess of Austria ; that, shortly after, a decree should be issued by the impartial mediators, declaring that Lyons was to be annexed to the newly-erected dynasty, and that in exchange Tours should be surrendered to the republican party ; and that, upon the French King refusing to accede to such iniquitous terms, the armies of the Holy Alliance were to march to the Rhine : how would Europe be made to ring from side to side, by the revolutionary press, at such a partition ; and how loudly would they applaud the Citizen King for having the firmness to resist the attempt ! And yet that is what France and England are now doing, with the applause of all the Liberal press of Europe ; and it is for such intrepid conduct on the part of the King of the Netherlands, that he is now the object of their obloquy and derision.

Ireland, which is perhaps as likely to happen, revolts against England. She shows her gratitude for the important concessions of the last fifty years, by throwing off the yoke of her benefactor, and proclaims a republican form of government. The Allied Powers, with France at their head, instantly interfere ; declare that the first shot fired by England at her revolted subjects will be considered as a declaration of war against all Europe ; but offer, at the same time, their good offices and mediation to effect a settlement of the differences between Great Britain and the Emerald Isle. Weakened by so great a defection, and overawed by so formidable a coalition, England reluctantly consents to the arbitration, and a truce is proclaimed between the adverse parties. Immediately the Allies declare, that the separation must be permanent ; that “it is evident” that England’s means of regaining her lost dominions are at an end, and that the peace of Europe must be no longer compromised by the disputes between the Irish and English people. Suiting the action to the word, they forthwith put a foreign prince, without the consent of England, on the Irish throne, and, to secure his independence of Great Britain, marry him to the daughter of the King of France. Immediately after, the Allied Powers make a treaty, by which Ireland is guaranteed to the revolutionary king ; and it is declared that the new kingdom is to *embrace*

Liverpool, and have right to the free navigation of the Mersey. Upon England's resisting the iniquitous partition, a French and Russian army, 150,000 strong, prepare for a descent on the shores of Kent. What would the English people, and the friends of freedom throughout the world, say to such a proceeding? Yet this is precisely what the English people have been led, blindfold, by their present rulers and the revolutionary press, to do!

The journals of Government, sensible that the conduct of their rulers on this vital question will not bear examination, endeavour to lay it upon the shoulders of the Allied Powers, and affect to lament the meshes in which they were left by the foreign policy of Lord Aberdeen. Of all absurdities this is the greatest. Russia, Prussia, and Austria, so far from sanctioning the attack on the King of the Netherlands, have solemnly *protested against it*; and Prussia, preparing to second her words by blows, has concentrated her armies on the Meuse. The King of the Netherlands professes his willingness *still* to submit the question of Antwerp and the Scheldt to the five Allied Powers, though he refuses to yield them up to the imperious demand of two of them. How, then, is it possible to involve the other Allied Powers in an iniquity of which they positively disapprove, and for which they are preparing to make war? True, they signed the treaty which gave Antwerp to Belgium; and their reasons for doing so, were the dread of a war with France and England united when in a state of revolution. But they have positively refused to sanction the employment of foreign force to coerce the Dutch; and without that, the revolutionary rabble of Belgium may thunder for ever against the citadel of Antwerp.

But because the three powers who signed the treaty for the partition of Poland have also signed the treaty for the partition of the Netherlands, is that any vindication for our joining in the spoliation? When two robbers unite to waylay a traveller, is it any excuse for them that *three others* have agreed to the conspiracy? We were told that arbitrary despotic governments alone commit injustice, and that, with the triumph of the people and the extension of democracy, the rule of justice and equity was to commence. How, then, are revolutionary France and revolutionary

England the foremost in the work of partition, when the other powers, ashamed of their signature to the disgraceful treaty, hang back, and refuse to put it in force? Is this the commencement of the fair rule of democratic justice? A treaty which the three absolute powers, the *partitioners of Poland, are ashamed of*, the revolutionary powers have no scruple in enforcing—an iniquity which Russia and Austria refuse to commit, France and England are ready to perpetrate!

The pretence that we are involved in all this through the diplomacy of the Tories, is such a monstrous perversion of truth, as cannot blind any but the most ignorant readers. When was the treaty which guaranteed Leopold's dominions signed by France and England? In July 1831; eight months after the accession of the Whigs to office. When was the treaty giving Antwerp to Belgium signed by the five powers? In November 1831, a year after the retirement of the Duke of Wellington from power. What treaty did the Duke of Wellington leave binding on his successors in regard to Belgium? The treaty of 1815, which guaranteed to the King of the Netherlands his whole dominions. What incipient mediation did he leave them to complete? That of the *five* Allied Powers, for the *pacific* settlement of the Belgian question. And yet we are told he involved Great Britain in a hostile aggression on Holland, and was the author of a measure of robbery by two of the mediating powers!

To give a show of equity to their spoliation, the revolutionary powers have summoned Leopold to surrender Venloo, and declare that Holland is to retain Luxembourg and Limbourg. This is a mere colourable pretext, destitute of the least weight, and too flimsy to deceive any one acquainted with the facts. Luxembourg always was in the hands of the Dutch; it formed part of the old patrimony of the house of Nassau, and the Belgians have no more right to that great fortress, or its territory, than they have to Magdeburg or Lisle. Venloo is a fortress of third-rate importance, about as fair an equivalent for Antwerp as Conway would be for Liverpool. Who ever heard of any works of Napoleon on Venloo, or any effort on his part to retain it as part of the outworks of his conquering dominions?

Venloo is situated on the right or German bank of the Meuse, and never belonged to Belgium ; so that to consider it as a compensation for the great and magnificent fortress of Antwerp, the key of the Scheldt, is as absurd as it would be to speak of Harwich as a compensation for London.

Hitherto we have argued the question on the footing of the *real merits* of the points at issue, and not the subordinate question on which the negotiations finally broke off. But here, too, injustice is not less manifest than in the general principle of the transaction.

It was stipulated, by the treaty of 15th November 1831, signed by all the Allied Powers, that the evacuation of the provinces to be mutually ceded on both sides, should take place *after* the exchange of the ratification of a final peace. Of course, Antwerp was held by Holland, and Venloo by Belgium, until that event ; and on that footing they have been held for the last twelve months.

But what do France and England *now* require ? Why, that Antwerp should be ceded by Holland *before* the treaty is either signed or agreed to, and when weighty matters are still in dependence between the contracting parties. The advantages which the King of the Netherlands holds, the security he possesses by holding that great fortress, is to be instantly abandoned, and he is to be left, *without any security*, to the tender mercies of the father-in-law of his enemy, and the friendly sympathy of their democratic allies in this island. Is this just ? Is it consistent with the treaty of November 1831, on which England and France justify their armed interference ? Is it not evidently a violation of both ? and does it not leave the revolutionary states as much in the wrong on the last disputed point of the Conference as on its general spirit ?

The answer of the King of the Netherlands to the summons of France and England to surrender the citadel of Antwerp, is so decisive of the justice of his cause on this point, that we cannot refrain from quoting it :—

“ Holland having acceded, not to the treaty of the 15th of November 1831, but to the greater part of its arrangements, must found its proceedings on the stipulations which it has accepted. Among the articles agreed to in concert with the Conference of London, is included the evacuation, in a fixed time after the exchange of the ratifications, of the territories which were respectively to change hands, which point was regulated by the last of the

twenty-four articles of 15th October 1831, by the treaty of 15th November, and in the projects of convention which have followed it. If, on the 11th June, the Conference proposed the 20th July for the evacuation of the respective territories, it declared, by its note of 20th July, that in making this proposal, it had thought that the treaty between Holland and Belgium would be ratified. To effect the evacuation at a time anterior to the exchange of the ratifications, would be acting in opposition both to the formally announced intentions of the Conference, and to the assent which has been given to them by the government of the Netherlands."

"It is true," says the *Times*, "that the territories were not to be evacuated on each side till the ratifications of a general peace are exchanged." This puts an end to the argument: we have not a shadow of justice for our demand of the immediate evacuation of Antwerp, any more than for the preceding treaty, which assigned it to Belgium.

The war in which, to serve our new and dearly-beloved revolutionary allies, and enable them to regain their menacing point to our shores, we are now about to be involved, may last ten days or ten years: it may cost £500,000 or £500,000,000: all that is in the womb of fate; and of that we know nothing. But the justice of the case, in either event, remains the same. That which is done is done, and cannot be undone: the signature of England has been affixed to the treaty with revolutionary France, for the partition of the territory of our allies; and there it will remain for ever, to call down the judgment of Heaven upon the guilty nation which permitted it.

In this war, our rulers have contrived to get us into such a situation, that by no possibility can we derive either honour, advantage, or security, from the consequences to which it may lead. If the French and English are victorious, and we succeed in storming the citadel of Antwerp for the tricolor flag, will England be a gainer by the victory—will our commerce be improved by placing the navigation of the Scheldt in the hands of the jealous manufacturers of France and Belgium, and for ever alienating our old and willing customers in the United Provinces? Will our national security be materially improved by placing the magnificent dockyards, and spacious arsenals, and impregnable fortifications, which Napoleon erected for our subjugation, in the hands of a revolutionary King of France and his warlike and able Prime Minister? If we are defeated, is the honour of England, the conqueror of France, likely

to be upheld, or its influence increased, by our inability to bully a fifth-rate power, even with the aid of our Jacobin allies? Whatever occurs, whether Holland submits in five days, or holds out bravely and nobly for five years; whether the united Tricolor and the Leopard are victorious or are vanquished, we can derive nothing but humiliation, danger, and disgrace from the event. We shall certainly incur all the losses and burdens of war: we can never obtain either its advantages or its glories.

In making these observations, we disclaim all idea of imputing to Ministers any intentional or wilful abandonment of the interests and honour of England. We believe that, as Englishmen and gentlemen, they are incapable of such baseness. What we assert is, that the passion for innovation, and their long-established admiration of France, have blinded their eyes; that they are as incapable of seeing the real consequences of their actions, as a young man is in the first fervour of love, or an inmate of bedlam in a paroxysm of insanity.

From this sickening scene of aggression, spoliation, and robbery, we turn with admiration to the firm and dignified, yet mild and moderate language of the Dutch Government. There was a time, when their conduct in resisting the partition of their country by two powerful and overbearing revolutionary neighbours, would have called forth the unanimous sympathy and admiration of the British people; when they would have compared it to the long glories of the House of Nassau, and the indomitable courage of that illustrious chief, who, when the armies of Louis XIV. were at the gates of Amsterdam, declared that he knew one way to avoid seeing the disgrace of his country, and that was to die in the last ditch. We cannot believe that revolutionary passions should have so completely changed the nature of a whole people, in so short a time, as to render them insensible to such heroic conduct. At all events, for the honour of human nature, we cannot forbear the gratification of adorning our pages by the following quotation from the last reply of the States-General of Holland to the speech of the King of the Netherlands, announcing the approaching attack of France and England.

“Never did the States-General approach the throne with feelings similar

to those of the present moment. They had fostered the well-grounded hope that equitable arrangements would have put a period to the pressure on the country, but this just expectation has been disappointed. The States-General are grieved at the course of the negotiations. Whilst we are moderate and indulgent, demands are made on us which are in opposition to the honour and the independence of the nation; a small but glorious state is sacrificed to a presumed general interest. It makes a deep impression to see that Foreign Powers entertain a feeling in favour of a people torn from us by violence and perfidy—a feeling leading to our destruction—instead of experiencing from the great powers aid in upholding our rights. The clouds that darken the horizon might lead to discouragement, were it not for the conviction of the nation that she does not deserve this treatment, and that the moral energy which enabled her to make the sacrifices already rendered, remains in undiminished strength to support her in the further sacrifices necessary for the conservation of the national independence: that energy ever shone most brilliant when the country was most in danger, and had to resist the superior forces of united enemies; that energy enabled her to re-establish her political edifice which had been demolished by the usurper; and the same energy must, under our King, maintain that edifice against the usurping demands or attacks of an unjust defection.

“The result is anticipated with confidence. The nation glories in her powerful means of defence, and in her sea and land forces, which are in arms to obtain equitable terms in the peace that is still so anxiously solicited.

“The charges are heavy, but the circumstances that render them necessary are unexampled; and there is no native of the country who would not cheerfully make the utmost sacrifices when the honour and independence of the nation are endangered. Much may be conceded for the sake of the peace of Europe, but self-preservation puts a limit to concessions when they have approached to the utmost boundary. The Netherlands have ever made, willingly, great sacrifices for the defence of their rights; but never have they voluntarily relinquished their national existence, and many times they have defended them with small numerical forces against far superior numbers. This same feeling now glows in every heart; and still there is the God of our forefathers, who has preserved us in times of the most imminent peril. In unison with their King, the States-General put their confidence in God; and, strong as they are in their unanimity of sentiments, and in the justice of their cause, they confidently look forward to the reward of a noble and magnanimous perseverance.”

The revolutionary journals of England call this the obstinacy of the King of Holland. It is obstinacy; the same obstinacy as Leonidas showed at Thermopylæ, and Themistocles at Salamis, and the Roman Senate after the battle of Cannæ, and the Swiss at Morgarten, and the Dutch at Haarlem; the obstinacy which commands the admiration of men through every succeeding age, and, amidst the injustice of this world, secures the blessing of Heaven.

The Dutch may have Antwerp wrested from them; they may be compelled, from inability to resist, to surrender it to the Allies. All that will not alter the case; it will not ultimately avert a European war; it will not the less prove fatal to the progress of freedom. The Allies cannot ultimately allow the key to the Scheldt, and the advanced post

of France against Britain, to remain in the hands of the French, or, what is the same thing, their subsidiary ally the Belgians. In every age, the establishment of the French power in Flanders has led to a European war; that in which a revolutionary force is intrenched there, is not destined to form an exception. A war of opinion must ensue sooner or later, when the tricolor standard is brought down to the Scheldt, and the eagle of Prussia floats on the Meuse. When that event comes, as come it will, then will England, whether republican or monarchical, *be compelled* to exert her force to drive back the French to their old frontier. A second war *must* be undertaken to regain what a moment of weakness and infatuation has lost in the first.

But what will be the result of such a war, provoked by the revolutionary ambition of France and the tame subservience of England, on the interests of freedom? If revolutionary ambition prevails, what chance has liberty of surviving amidst the tyranny of democratic power? If legitimate authority conquers, how can it exist amidst the Russian and Austrian bayonets? When will real freedom again be restored as it existed in France under the mild sway of the Bourbons, or as prosperous a period be regained for that distracted country as that which elapsed from 1815 to 1830? It is evident that freedom must perish in the fierce contest between democratic and regal tyranny; it is hard to say whether it has most to fear from the triumph of the French or the Russian bayonets.

It is sometimes advantageous to see the light in which the conduct of Great Britain is viewed in foreign states. The following article is from the *Manheim Gazette*, of the 8th inst. :—"The French Ministry and the English Whigs have in vain asserted that they do not mean to rule by the principle of Propagandism; these assurances are no guarantee, since Propagandism subsists in the system they have established, and cannot cease till that system is at an end. The delegates of the people—for in this light must be viewed all governments founded upon the principle of popular sovereignty—must of necessity seek their allies among other delegates of the same character; and to endeavour to find friends among their neighbours, is to act as if they sought to revolutionise such states as profess the monarchi-

cal principle. In this respect, the influence of the Grey Ministry is more pernicious than that of the French Ministry. The former having commenced by revolutionising England, and feeling itself closely pressed by a reaction at home, feels a greater desire to form alliances with other nations; and, consequently, it is less solicitous about treaties and rights than France, who would unite herself more readily with monarchical states, if she were not restrained by the alliance with England. It is evident that England now occupies the place which was occupied by France after the Revolution. Already the Grey Ministry finds itself compelled to repair one extreme resolution by another; and in a very short time repose, order, and peace will become impossible. We repeat, therefore, that it is the Grey Ministry which threatens the peace of Europe." Such is the light in which our Government is viewed by the Continental Powers, and such the alarm which they feel at the threatened attack on Holland by the two revolutionary states; and yet we are told by the partisans of Administration, that they are going to attack Antwerp "to *preserve the peace of Europe.*"

The Ministerial Journals have at length let out the real motive of our conduct. The *Times* tells us that it is useless to blink the question; for if the French and English do not attack Antwerp together, France *will attack it alone*, and that this would infallibly bring on a general war. That is to say, we have got into the company of a robber who is bent upon assailing a passenger upon the highway, and to prevent murder *we join the robber in the attack*. Did it never occur to our rulers, that there was a more effectual way to prevent the iniquity? and that is, to get out of such bad company, and *defend the traveller?* Would France ever venture to attack Antwerp, if she were not supported by England? Would she ever do so, if England, Austria, Russia, and Prussia were leagued together to prevent the march of revolutionary ambition? On whom, then, do the consequences of the aggression clearly rest? On the English Government, who, against the interests and honour of England, join in the attack, when they hold the balance in their hands, and by a word could prevent it.

The years of prosperity will not endure for ever to Eng-

land, any more than to any earthly thing. The evil days will come when the grandeur of an old and venerated name will sink amidst the storms of adversity; when her vast and unwieldy empire will be dismembered, and province after province fall away from her mighty dominions. When these days come, then will she feel what it was to have betrayed and insulted her allies in the plenitude of her power. When Ireland rises in open rebellion against her dominion; when the West Indies are lost, and with them the right arm of her naval strength; when the armies of the Continent crowd the coasts of Flanders, and the navies of Europe are assembled in the Scheldt, to humble the mistress of the waves; then will she feel how deeply, how irreparably, her character has suffered from the infatuation of the last two years. In vain will she call on her once faithful friends in Holland or Portugal to uphold the cause of freedom; in vain will she appeal to the world against the violence with which she is menaced; her desertion of her allies in the hour of their adversity, her atrocious alliance with revolutionary violence, will rise up in judgment against her. When called on for aid, they will answer, Did you aid us in the day of trial? When reminded of the alliance of a hundred and fifty years, they will point to the partition of 1832. England may expiate, by suffering, the disgrace of her present defection; efface it from the minds of men she never will.

THE ATHENIAN DEMOCRACY

[BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, JULY 1837]

IT is a remarkable fact, that so numerous and pregnant are the proofs afforded by history, in all ages, of the universal and irremediable evils of democratic ascendancy, that there is hardly a historical writer of any note, in any country or period of the world, who has not concurred in condemning it as the most dangerous form of government, and the most fatal enemy of that freedom which it professes to support. In the classical writers, indeed, are to be found numerous and impassioned, as well as perfectly just, eulogies on the ennobling effects of civil liberty ; but it is liberty, as contradistinguished from slavery, which is the object of their encomium ; and none felt so strongly, or have expressed so forcibly, the pernicious tendency of unbridled democracy to undermine and destroy the civil freedom and general protection of all classes, which is unquestionably the first of human blessings. Thucydides, whose profound mind was forcibly attracted by the varied operations of the aristocratic and democratic factions, which in his age distracted Greece, and whose conflict forms the subject of his immortal work, has told us, that “invariably in civil contest it was found at Athens that the worst and most abandoned public characters obtained the ascendancy.” Aristotle has condensed in six words the everlasting characteristic of democratic government—“Of all tyrannies, the worst is Democracy.” Sallust has pointed to the “*Egestas cupida novarum rerum*,” as the most prolific source of the evils which first undermined, and at last overthrew,

Athens : its Rise and Fall. By E. L. BULWER, Esq. Saunders and Otley : London, 1837.

the solid foundations of Roman liberty ; and left in his Catiline conspiracy a picture of the demagogue, so just and true in all its touches, that in every age it has the air of having been drawn from the existing popular idol. The phrase “ *Alieni appetens, sui profusus* ;” * has passed into a proverbial characteristic of that mixture of rapacity and insolvency which ever forms the basis of the characters who attain to democratic ascendancy. Livy, amidst the majestic and heart-stirring narrative of Roman victories, never loses an opportunity of throwing in a reflection on the mingled instability and tyranny of popular assemblies ; and all the experience of the woful tyranny which the triumph of democracy under Cæsar brought upon the Roman commonwealth, and the leaden chains of the centralised government of his successors, has not blinded the far-seeing sagacity of Tacitus to the origin of all these evils in the widespread force of popular wickedness and folly, and the fatal overthrow of the long-established sway of the Senate by the military talents and consummate address of the first Emperor of the world.

In modern times the same striking characteristic of all the greatest observers of human events is equally conspicuous. Five hundred years ago, Machiavel deduced, from a careful retrospect of Roman history, not less than the experience of the Republican States with which he was surrounded, the clearest views of the enormous perils of unbridled democracy ; and he has left, in his Discourses on Livy and his *Principe*, maxims of government essentially adverse to democratic establishments, which, in depth of thought and justice of observation, had never been surpassed. Bacon clearly perceived, even amidst all the servility of the nation, and tyranny of the Government of England under the Tudor princes, the opposite dangers of republican rule ; and his celebrated apophthegm—that political changes, to be safe, should resemble those of nature, which, albeit the greatest in the end, are imperceptible in their progress—has passed into a consuetudinary maxim, to which, to the end of the world, the wise will never cease to refer, and against which the rash and reckless will never cease to chafe. The profound mind of Hume, it is well known, beheld the long and varied story

* “ Covetous of another’s, profuse of his own.”

of England's existence with perhaps too great a bias in favour of monarchical institutions; and Gibbon, even amidst the long series of calamities which accumulated round the sinking fortunes of the Roman empire, has sufficiently evinced his strong sense of the impracticable nature and tyrannic tendency of democratic institutions.* Sir James Mackintosh, in his maturer years, strongly supported the same sound and rational principles; and all the fervour and energy of the youthful author of the *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*, could not blind his better informed judgment, later in life, to the frightful dangers of democratic ascendancy. He arrived, at length, at the conclusion, "that the only government which offers a rational prospect of establishing or preserving freedom, is that where the power of directing affairs is vested in the aristocratic interest, under the perpetual safeguard of popular watchfulness."† Burke, almost forgotten as a champion of Whig doctrines in the earlier part of his career, stands forth in imperishable lustre as the giant supporter of Conservative principles in the zenith of his intellect. Pitt has told us that "democracy is not the government of the few by the many, but the many by the few; with this addition, that the few who are thus raised to power, are the most dangerous and worthless of the community;" and Fox, who spent his life in supporting Liberal principles, with his dying breath bequeathed to his successors a perpetual struggle with the gigantic power which had risen out of its spirit, and embodied its desires.

Nor is France behind England in the same profound and far-seeing views of human affairs. Napoleon, elevated on the wave, and supported by the passions, of the Revolution, conceived, as he has himself told us, that he was commissioned by Heaven to chastise its crimes and extinguish its atrocity. Madame de Stael, albeit passionately devoted to the memory of her father, the parent of the Revolution, and the author of the French Reform Bill, yet devoted the maturity of her intellect to illustrate the superior advantages which the mixed form of government established in England afforded; and in her *Treatise on the French Revolution*, supported

* In his letters and miscellaneous works, his opinions on this subject are still more clearly expressed.

† *Mackintosh's Memoirs*, i. 174.

with equal wisdom and eloquence the Conservative principles, in which all mature minds of a certain elevation in every age have concurred : while Chateaubriand, the illustrious relic of feudal grandeur, and the graphic painter of modern suffering, has arrived, from the experience of his varied and interesting existence, at the same lofty and ennobling conclusions ; and M. de Tocqueville, the worthy conclusion to such a line of greatness, has shown, amidst the most impartial survey of American equality, the seeds, in the undisguised "tyranny of the majority," of the eventual destruction of civil liberty.

These enemies of democracy in every age have been led to these conclusions, *just because they were the steadiest friends of freedom.* They deprecated and resisted the unbridled sway of the people, because they saw clearly that it was utterly destructive to their real and durable interests ; that it permitted that sacred fire which, duly restrained and repressed, is the fountain of all greatness, whether in nations or individuals, to waste itself in pernicious flames, or expand into ruinous conflagration. They supported the establishment of Conservative checks on popular extravagance, because they perceived from experience, and had learned from history, that the gift of unbridled power is fatal to its possessors, and that least of all is it tolerable where the responsibility, the sole check upon its excesses, is destroyed from the number among whom it is divided. They advocated a mixed form of government, because they saw clearly that under such, and such only, had the blessings of freedom in any age been enjoyed for any length of time by the people. They were fully aware that democratic energy has, in every age, been the mainspring of human improvement ; but they were not less aware, that this spring is one of such strength and power that, if not duly loaded, it immediately tears the machine to pieces. They admired and cherished the warmth of the fire, but they were not so blinded by its advantages, as to permit it to escape its iron bars, and wrap the house in flames ; they enjoyed the vigour of the horses which whirled the chariot along ; but they were not so insane as to cast the charioteer from his seat, and allow their strength and energy to overturn and destroy the vehicle : they acknowledged with gratitude the genial warmth of the central

heat, which clothed the sides of the volcano with luxuriant fruits ; but they looked to either hand, and beheld in the black furrow of desolation the track of the burning lava which had issued from its summit when it escaped its barriers, and filled the heavens with an eruption.

Nothing daunted by this long and majestic array of authority against him, Mr Bulwer has taken the field in two octavo volumes, in order to illustrate the beneficial effect of republican institutions upon social greatness and national prosperity. He has selected for his subject the Athenian democracy—the eye of Greece—the cradle of history, tragedy, and the fine arts ; the spot in the world where, in the narrowest limits, achievements the most mighty have been won, and genius the most immortal has been developed. He conceived, doubtless, that in Attica at least the extraordinary results of democratic agency could not be disputed. The Roman victories might be traced to the wisdom of the Senate ; the Swiss patriotism to the simplicity of its mountains ; the prosperity of Holland to the wisdom of its burgomasters ; the endurance of America to the boundless vent afforded by its back settlements : but in Athens none of these peculiarities existed, and there the brilliant results of popular rule and long-established self-government were set forth in imperishable colours. We rejoice that he has made the attempt ; we anticipate nothing but good to the Conservative cause from his efforts. It is a common saying among lawyers, that falsehood may be exposed in a witness by cross-examination, but that truth only comes out the more clearly from all the efforts which are made for its confusion. It is a fortunate day for the cause of historic truth when the leaders of the democratic party leave the declamation of the hustings and the flattery of popular adulation, and betake themselves to the arena of real argument. We feel the same joy at beholding Mr Bulwer arm himself in the panoply of the field, and court the assaults of historical investigation, with which the knights of old saw themselves extricated from the mob of plebeian insurrection, and led forth to the combat of highborn chivalry.

Mr Bulwer is, in every point of view, a highly distinguished writer. His work on England and the English is a brilliant performance, abounding with sparkling observations,

containing many profound ones, and particularly interesting to the multitude of persons to whom foreign travelling has rendered the comparison of English and French character and institutions an object of interest. The great defects of this work, in a political point of view, is that he does not assign sufficient weight to the agency of a superintending Providence, and the laboured attempt to exculpate the errors, and screen the vices, and draw a veil over the perils of democratic government. The want of the first, in an investigation into human affairs, is like the absence of the character of Hamlet in the play bearing his name : the presence of the second, a continued drawback on the pleasure which an impartial mind derives from his splendid eloquence and deeply interesting observations. More especially is a constant sense of the corruption and weakness of human nature an indispensable element in every inquiry or observation which has for its object the weighing the capability of mankind to bear the excitements, and wield the powers, and exercise the responsibility of self-government. We are not going to enter into any theological argument on original sin, how intimately soever it may be blended with the foundation of all investigations into the right principles of government ; we assert only a *fact*, demonstrated by the experience of every age, and acquiesced in by the wise of every country, that there is a universal tendency to corruption and license in human nature ; that religion is the only effectual bridle on its excesses ; and that the moment a community is established, without the effective agency of that powerful curb on human passion, the progress of national affairs becomes nothing but the career of the prodigal—brilliant and alluring in the outset, dismal and degrading in the end. It is on this account that the friends of freedom have in every age been the most resolute and persevering enemies of democracy ; because that fervent and searching element, essential to national existence, and the best ingredient in its prosperity, if duly coerced and tempered, becomes its most devouring and fatal enemy the instant that it breaks through its barriers, and obtains the unrestrained direction of the public destinies.

The views of the republican and the democrat are the very reverse of all this. According to them, wickedness

and corruption are the inheritance of the oligarchy alone ; aristocracies are always selfish, grasping, rapacious ; democracies invariably energetic, generous, confiding. Nobles, they think, never act but from designing or selfish views ; their constant agent is human corruption ; their incessant appeal is to the basest and most degrading principles of our nature. Republicans alone are really philanthropic in their views ; they alone attend to the interests of the masses ; they alone lay the foundations of the social system on the broad basis of general wellbeing. Monarchical governments are founded on the caprice of a single tyrant ; aristocratic, on the wants of a rapacious oligarchy ; democratic alone on the consulted desires and grateful experience of the whole community. If these propositions were all true, they would be decisive in favour of popular, and extremely popular institutions ; but unfortunately, though it is perfectly correct that monarchies and aristocracies are mainly directed, if uncontrolled by the people, to support the interests of a single or an oligarchical government, it is no less true, that the rapacity of a democracy is just as great ; that the responsibility of its leaders, from the number of those invested with power, is infinitely less, and that the calamities which, in its unmitigated force, it in consequence lets loose on the community, are such as in every age have led to its speedy subversion.

The Conservative principle of government, on the other hand, is, that mankind are radically and universally corrupt ; that when invested with power, in whatever form of government, and from whatever class of society, they are immediately inclined to apply it to their own selfish ends ; that the diffusion of education and knowledge has no tendency whatever to eradicate this universal propensity, but only gives it a different, less violent, but not less interested direction ; that the diffusion of supreme power among a multitude of hands diminishes to nothing the responsibility of each individual, while it augments, in a proportionate degree, the rapacity and selfishness which is brought to bear on public affairs ; that when the multitude are the spectators of government, they are inclined to check or restrain its abuses, because others profit, and they suffer by them ; but *when they become government itself, they instantly support*

them, because they profit, and others suffer from their continuance ; that democratic institutions thus, when once fully and really established, rapidly deprave the public mind, and engender a universal spirit of selfishness in the majority of the people, which speedily subverts the foundations of national prosperity ; and that it is only when property is the directing, and numbers the controlling power, that the inherent vices and selfishness of the depositaries of authority can be effectually coerced by the opinion of the great majority who are likely to suffer by its excesses, or a lasting foundation be laid, in the adherence of national opinion to the principles of virtue, for any lengthened enjoyment of the blessings of prosperity, or any durable discharge of the commands of duty.

These are the opposite and conflicting principles of government which are now at issue in the world ; and it is to support the former that Mr Bulwer has brought the power of a cultivated mind, the force of original genius, and the vigour of an enlarged intellect. Athens was a favourable ground to take, in order to enforce the incalculable powers of the democratic spring in society. Nowhere else is to be found a state so small in its origin, and yet so great in its progress ; so contracted in its territory, and yet so gigantic in its achievements ; so limited in numbers, and yet so immortal in greatness. Its dominions on the continent of Greece did not exceed an English county : its free inhabitants never amounted to thirty thousand citizens ; yet these inconsiderable numbers have filled the world with their renown. Poetry, philosophy, architecture, sculpture, tragedy, comedy, geometry, physics, history, politics, almost date their origin from Athenian genius ; and the monuments of art with which they have overspread the world still form the standard of taste in every civilised nation on earth. It is not surprising that so brilliant and captivating a spectacle should in every age have dazzled and transported mankind ; and that, seeing democratic institutions co-existing with so extraordinary a development of the intellectual faculties, it should have come to be generally imagined that they really were cause and effect, and that the only secure foundation which could be laid for the attainment of the highest honours of our being, was in the exten-

sion of the powers of government to the great body of the people.

Athens, however, has its dark as well as its brilliant side ; and if the perfection of its science, the delicacy of its taste, and the refinement of its arts, furnish a plausible, and, in a certain degree, a just ground for representing democratic institutions as the greatest stimulant to the human mind, the brevity of its existence, the injustice of its decisions, the instability of its councils, and the cruelty of its decrees, afford too fair a reason for doubting the wisdom of imitating, on a larger scale, any of its institutions. Its rise was rapid and glorious ; but the era of its prosperity was brief ; and it sunk, after a short space of brilliant existence, into an obscure, and, politically speaking, insignificant old age. The sway of the multitude, who formed the council of last resort in the commonwealth, was capricious and tyrannical, and such as thoroughly disgusted all the states in alliance. There was the secret of its weakness. Instead of protecting and cherishing the tributary and allied states, the Athenian democracy insulted and oppressed them, and, in consequence, on the first serious reverse, they all revolted ; and the fleets which had constituted their strength were at once ranged on the side of the enemies of the state. The flames of Aigospotamos consumed the Athenian navy ; but that disaster, great as it undoubtedly was, was not greater than the rout of Thrasymene, the slaughter of Cannæ, the irruption of the Gauls to Rome. But Athens had not the steady persevering rule of the Roman Patricians, nor the wise and beneficent policy of the Senate to the states in alliance with it ; and thence it wanted both the energy requisite to rise superior to all its misfortunes, and the grateful feelings which, in moments of disaster, ranged the allied states in steady and durable array around it. During the invasion by Hannibal, which, as involving a civil contest between the Patricians and Plebeians in all the Italian cities, very nearly resembled the Peloponnesian war, not one state of any moment revolted from the Roman alliance till after the disaster of Cannæ ; and even then it was only Capua, the rival of Rome, which took any vigorous part with the Carthaginians. A very little effort was sufficient to retain the

other allied cities in the Roman confederacy, or reclaim such as, from the presence of the Punic arms, had passed over to their enemies : whereas in Greece, on the very first reverse, the whole states and colonies in alliance constantly passed over to the Lacedemonian league ; and the growth of the power of Athens was repeatedly checked by the periodical reduction of its strength to the resources of its own territory. Had the Athenian multitude possessed the enduring fortitude and beneficent rule of the Roman aristocracy, they might, like them, have risen superior to every reverse, and gradually spread, by the willing incorporation of lesser states with their dominions, into a vast empire, extending over the whole shores of the Mediterranean, and giving law, like the mighty empire which succeeded them, for a thousand years to the whole civilised world.

Mr Bulwer appears to be aware of the brief tenure of existence which Athens enjoyed ; but he erroneously, as we think, ascribes to general causes or inevitable necessity what in its case was the result merely of the fever of democratic activity.

“ In that restless and unpausing energy, which is the characteristic of an intellectual republic, there seems, as it were, a kind of destiny : a power impossible to resist urges the state from action to action, from progress to progress, with a rapidity dangerous while it dazzles ; resembling in this the career of individuals impelled onward, first to attain, and then to preserve, power, and who cannot struggle against the fate which necessitates them to soar, until, by the moral gravitation of human things, the point which has *no beyond* is attained ; and the next effort to rise is but the prelude of their fall. In such states Time, indeed, moves with gigantic strides ; years concentrate what would be the epochs of centuries in the march of less popular institutions. The planet of their fortunes rolls with an equal speed through the cycle of internal civilisation as of foreign glory. The condition of their brilliant life is the absence of repose. The accelerated circulation of the blood beautifies but consumes ; and action itself, exhausting the stores of youth by its very vigour, becomes a mortal but divine disease.”

Now, in this eloquent passage there is an obvious error : and it is on this point that the Conservative or Constitutional principle of Government mainly differs from the Movement or Democratic. Aware of the violence of the fever which in republican states exhausts the strength and wears out the energy of the people, the Conservative would not extinguish but regulate it ; he would stop its diseased and feverish, to prolong and strengthen its healthy and vital action. He would not allow the youth to waste his

strength and life in a brief period of guilty excess or unrestrained indulgence, but so chasten and moderate the fever of the blood as to secure for him a useful manhood and a respected old age. The democrat, on the other hand, would plunge him at once into all the excesses of youth and intemperance, throw him into the arms of harlots and the orgies of drunkenness, and, amidst wine and women, the harp and the dance, lead him to poverty, sickness, and premature dissolution. And ancient history affords a memorable contrast in this particular; for while Athens, worn out and exhausted by the fever of democratic activity, rose like a brilliant meteor only to fall after a life as short as that of a single individual, Rome, in whom this superabundant energy was for centuries coerced and restrained by the solidity of Patrician institutions and the steadiness of Patrician rule, continued steadily to rise and advance through a succession of ages, and at length succeeded in subjecting the whole civilised earth to its dominion.

It has long been a matter of reproach to Athens, that she behaved with the blackest ingratitude to her greatest citizens; and that Miltiades, Themistocles, Aristides, Cimon, Socrates, Thucydides, and a host of other illustrious men, received exile, confiscation, or death, as the reward for the inestimable benefits they had conferred upon their fellow-citizens. Mr Bulwer is much puzzled how to explain away these awkward facts; but as the banishment of these illustrious citizens, and the death of this illustrious sage, from the effects of popular jealousy, cannot be denied, he boldly endeavours to justify these atrocious acts of the Athenian democracy. In regard to Miltiades he observes :—

“ The case was simply this,—Miltiades was accused—whether justly or unjustly no matter—it was clearly as impossible not to receive the accusation, and to try the cause, as it would be for an English court of justice to refuse to admit a criminal action against Lord Grey or the Duke of Wellington. Was Miltiades guilty or not? This we cannot tell. We know that he was tried according to the law, and that the Athenians thought him guilty, for they condemned him. So far this is not ingratitude—it is the course of law. A man is tried and found guilty: if past services and renown were to save the great from punishment when convicted of a state offence, society would, perhaps, be disorganised, and certainly a free state would cease to exist. The question, therefore, shrinks to this,—was it, or was it not, ungrateful in the people to relax the penalty of death, legally incurred, and commute it to a heavy fine? I fear we shall find few instances

of greater clemency in monarchies, however mild. Miltiades unhappily died. But nature slew him, not the Athenian people. And it cannot be said with greater justice of the Athenians, than of a people no less illustrious, and who are now their judges, that it was their custom '*de tuer un Amiral pour encourager les autres.*'"

This passage affords an example of the determination which Mr Bulwer generally evinces to justify and support the acts of democratic societies, however extravagant or monstrous they may have been. Doubtless, we are not informed very specifically as to the nature of the evidence adduced in support of the charge of bribery brought against Miltiades. Doubtless, also, it was necessary to receive the charge when once preferred; but was it necessary to *convict him*, and send the hero of Marathon, the saviour of his country, into a painful exile, which ultimately proved his death? That is the point; and, as the evidence is not laid before us, what right has Mr Bulwer to assume that the Athenian multitude were not ungrateful or unjust in their decision? For their conduct in this instance, they received the unanimous condemnation of the historians of antiquity, and yet Mr Bulwer affirms that never was complaint more unjust. The *fact* is certain, that all the greatest benefactors of Athens were banished by the ostracism, or vote of all the citizens, though the evidence adduced in support of the charges is, for the most part, unknown; but as these deeds were the acts of democratic assemblies, Mr Bulwer, without any grounds for his opinion, in opposition to the unanimous voice of antiquity, vindicates and approves them. The allusion to the tragic fate of Admiral Byng, in the conclusion of the passage, is peculiarly unfortunate. Everybody knows that he was sacrificed to the loud *popular* clamour for a victim to expiate our disgrace; another proof among the many which history affords, that mankind in similar circumstances are in all ages much the same.

It is clear, from Mr Bulwer's own admission, that the banishment of almost all these illustrious benefactors of Athens was owing to their resisting democratic innovations, or striving to restore the constitution to the mixed condition in which it existed previous to the great democratic innovations of Solon and Themistocles. But such resistance, or attempts even by the most constitutional means to restore,

he seems to consider as amply sufficient to justify their exile ! In regard to the banishment of Cimon, he observes :—

“ Without calling into question the integrity and the patriotism of Cimon, without supposing that he would have entered into any intrigue against the Athenian independence of foreign powers—a supposition his subsequent conduct effectually refutes—he might, as a sincere and warm partisan of the nobles, and a resolute opposer of the popular party, have sought to restore at home the aristocratic balance of power, by whatever means his great rank, and influence, and connexion with the Lacedæmonian party could afford him. We are told, at least, that he not only *opposed all the advances of the more liberal party*—that he not only stood resolutely by the interests and dignities of the Areopagus, which had ceased to harmonise with the more modern institutions, but that he expressly sought to *restore* certain prerogatives which that assembly had formally lost during his foreign expeditions, and that he earnestly endeavoured to bring back the whole constitution to the more aristocratic government established by Clisthenes. It is one thing to preserve, it is another to restore. A people may be deluded, under popular pretexts, out of the rights they have newly acquired, but they never submit to be openly despoiled of them. Nor can we call that ingratitude which is but the refusal to surrender to the merits of an individual the acquisitions of a nation.

“ All things considered, then, I believe, that if ever ostracism was justifiable, it was so in the case of Cimon ; nay, it was, perhaps, absolutely essential to the preservation of the constitution. His very honesty made him resolute in his attempts against that constitution. His talents, his rank, his fame, his services, only rendered those attempts more dangerous.

“ Could the reader be induced to view, with an examination equally dispassionate, the several ostracisms of Aristides and Themistocles, he might see equal causes of justification, both in the motives and in the results. The first was absolutely *necessary for the defeat of the aristocratic party*, and the removal of restrictions on those energies which instantly found the most glorious vents for action : the second was justified by a *similar necessity*, that produced similar effects. To impartial eyes a people may be vindicated without traducing those whom a people are driven to oppose. In such august and complicated trials, the accuser and defendant may be both innocent.”

Here, then, is the key to the hideous ingratitude of the Athenian people to their two most illustrious benefactors, Aristides and Cimon. *They obstructed the Movement Party* : they held by the constitution, and endeavoured to bring back a mixed form of government. This heinous offence was, in the eyes of the Athenian democracy, amply sufficient to justify their banishment : a proceeding thought right, even although they were *innocent* of the charges laid against them—as if injustice can in any case be vindicated by state necessity, or the form of government is to be approved which requires for its maintenance the periodical sacrifice of its noblest and most illustrious citizens !

In another place, Mr Bulwer observes :—

“ Themistocles was summoned to the ordeal of the ostracism, and condemned by the majority of suffrages. Thus, like Aristides, not punished for offences, *but paying the honourable penalty of rising by genius to that state of eminence, which threatens danger to the equality of republics.*

“ He departed from Athens, and chose his refuge at Argos, whose hatred to Sparta, his deadliest foe, promised him the securest protection.

“ Death soon afterwards removed Aristides from all competitorship with Cimon; according to the most probable accounts he died at Athens; and at the time of Plutarch his monument was still to be seen at Phalerum. His countrymen, who, despite all plausible charges, were never ungrateful except where their liberties appeared imperilled (whether rightly or erroneously our documents are too scanty to prove), erected his monument at the public charge, portioned his three daughters, and awarded to his son Lysimachus a grant of one hundred minæ of silver, a plantation of one hundred plethra of land, and a pension of four drachmæ a-day (double the allowance of an Athenian ambassador.)”

There can be no doubt that the admission here candidly made by Mr Bulwer is well founded; and that jealousy of the eminence of their great national benefactors, or an anxiety to remove aristocratic barriers to further popular innovations, was the real cause of that ingratitude to their most illustrious benefactors, which has left so dark a stain on the Athenian character. But can it seriously be argued that that constitution is to be approved, and held up for imitation, which in this manner requires that national services should almost invariably be followed by confiscation and exile; and anticipates the overthrow of the public liberties from the ascendancy of every illustrious man, if he is not speedily sent into banishment? Is this the boasted intelligence of the masses? Is this the wisdom which democratic institutions bring to bear upon public affairs? Is this the reward which, by a permanent law of nature, freedom must ever provide for the most illustrious of its champions? Why is it necessary that great men and beneficent statesmen or commanders should invariably be exiled? The English constitution required for its continuance the exile neither of Pitt nor Fox, of Nelson nor Wellington. The Roman republic, until the fatal period when the authority of the aristocracy was overthrown by the growing encroachments of the plebeians, retained all its illustrious citizens, with a few well-known exceptions, in its own bosom; and the Tomb of the Scipios still attests the number of that heroic race, who, with the exception of the illustrious

conqueror of Hannibal, the victim, like Themistocles, of democratic jealousy, were gathered to the tomb of their fathers. There is no necessity in a well-regulated state, where the different powers are duly balanced, of subjecting the illustrious to the ostracism : good government provides against danger without committing injustice.

Mr Bulwer has candidly stated the pernicious effect of those most vicious of the many vicious institutions of Athens—the exacting tribute from their conquered and allied states, to the relief of the dominant multitude in the ruling city ; and the fatal devolution to the whole citizens of the duties and responsibility of judicial power. On the first subject, he observes—

“ Thus, at home and abroad, time and fortune, the occurrence of events, and the happy accident of great men, not only maintained the present eminence of Athens, but promised, to ordinary foresight, a long duration of her glory and her power. To deeper observers, the picture might have presented dim, but prophetic shadows. It was clear that the command Athens had obtained was utterly disproportioned to her natural resources ; that her greatness was altogether artificial, and rested partly upon moral rather than physical causes, and partly upon the fears and the weakness of her neighbours. A sterile soil, a limited territory, a scanty population—all these—the drawbacks and disadvantages of nature—the wonderful energy and confident daring of a free state might conceal in prosperity ; but the first calamity could not fail to expose them to jealous and hostile eyes. The empire delegated to the Athenians, they must naturally desire to retain and increase ; and there was every reason to forebode that their ambition would soon exceed their capacities to sustain it. As the state became accustomed to its power, it would learn to abuse it. Increasing civilisation, luxury, and art, brought with them new expenses, and Athens had already been permitted to indulge with impunity the dangerous passion of exacting tribute from her neighbours. Dependence upon other resources than those of the native population has ever been a main cause of the destruction of despotisms, and it cannot fail, sooner or later, to be equally pernicious to the republics that trust to it. The resources of taxation confined to freemen and natives, are almost incalculable ; the resources of tribute wrung from foreigners and dependents are sternly limited and terribly precarious : they rot away the true spirit of industry in the people that demand the impost ; they implant ineradicable hatred in the states that concede it.”

There can be no doubt that these observations are well founded ; and let us beware lest they become applicable to ourselves. Already in the policy of England has been evinced a sufficient inclination to load Colonial industry with oppressive duties, to the relief of the dominant island, as the enormous burdens imposed on West India produce, to the entire relief of the corresponding agricultural produce at home, sufficiently demonstrate. And if the present democratic ascendancy in this country should continue una-

bated for any considerable time, we venture to prophesy, that if no other and more immediate cause of ruin sends the commonwealth to perdition, *it will infallibly see its colonial empire break off, and consequently its maritime power destroyed*, by the injustice done to, or the burdens imposed on, its colonial possessions, by the impatient ruling multitude at home, who, in any measure calculated to diminish present burdens on, or secure present advantages to, themselves, will ever think they discern the most expedient and popular course of policy.

The other enormous evil of the Athenian constitution, viz., the exercise of judicial powers of the highest description by a mob of several thousand citizens, is thus described by our author :—

“A yet more pernicious evil in the social state of the Athenians was radical in their constitution : it was their courts of justice. Proceeding upon a theory that must have seemed specious and plausible to an inexperienced and infant republic, Solon had laid it down as a principle of his code, that as all men were interested in the preservation of law, so all men might exert the privilege of the plaintiff and accuser. As society grew more complicated, the door was thus opened to every species of vexatious charge and frivolous litigation. The common informer became a most harassing and powerful personage, and made one of a fruitful and crowded profession ; and in the very capital of liberty there existed the worst species of espionage. But justice was not thereby facilitated. The informer was regarded with universal hatred and contempt ; and it is easy to perceive, from the writings of the great comic poet, that the sympathies of the Athenian audience were, as those of the English public at this day, enlisted against the man who brought the inquisition of the law to the hearth of his neighbour.

“Solon committed a yet more fatal and incurable error when he carried the democratic principle into judicial tribunals. He evidently considered that the very strength and life of his constitution rested in the *Heliæ*—a court the numbers and nature of which have been already described. Perhaps, at a time when the old oligarchy was yet so formidable, it might have been difficult to secure justice to the poorer classes, while the judges were selected from the wealthier. But justice to all classes became a yet more capricious uncertainty when a court of law resembled a popular hustings.

“If we intrust a wide political suffrage to the people, the people at least hold no trust for others than themselves and their posterity : they are not responsible to the public, for they *are* the public. But in law, where there are two parties concerned, the plaintiff and defendant, the judge should not only be incorruptible, but strictly responsible. In Athens the people became the judge ; and, in offences punishable by fine, were the very party interested in procuring condemnation : the numbers of the jury prevented all responsibility, excused all abuses, and made them susceptible of the same shameless excesses that characterise self-elected corporations—from which appeal is idle, and over which public opinion exercises no control. These numerous, ignorant, and passionate assemblies were liable at all times to the heats of party, to the eloquence of individuals, to the whims and caprices, the prejudices, the impatience, and the turbulence, which must ever be the characteristics of a multitude orally addressed. It was evident also that from

service in such a court, the wealthy, the eminent, and the learned, with other occupation or amusement, would soon seek to absent themselves. And the final blow to the integrity and respectability of the popular judicature was given at a later period by Pericles, when he instituted a salary, just sufficient to tempt the poor and to be disdained by the affluent, to every dicast or juryman in the ten ordinary courts. Legal science became not the profession of the erudite and the laborious few, but the livelihood of the ignorant and idle multitude. The canvassing, the cajoling, the bribery, that resulted from this the most vicious institution of the Athenian democracy, are but too evident and melancholy tokens of the imperfection of human wisdom. Life, property, and character, were at the hazard of a popular election. These evils must have been long in progressive operation; but perhaps they were scarcely visible till the fatal innovation of Pericles, and the flagrant excesses that ensued, allowed the people themselves to listen to the branding and terrible satire upon the popular judicature, which is still preserved to us in the comedy of Aristophanes.

“ At the same time, certain critics and historians have widely and grossly erred in supposing that these courts of ‘the sovereign multitude’ were partial to the poor, and hostile to the rich. All testimony proves that the fact was lamentably the reverse. The defendant was accustomed to engage the persons of rank or influence whom he might number as his friends to appear in court on his behalf. And property was employed to procure at the bar of justice the suffrages it could command at a political election. The greatest vice of the democratic *Heliaë* was, that, by a fine, the wealthy could purchase pardon; by interest, the great could soften law. But the chances were against the poor man. To him litigation was indeed cheap, but justice dear. He had much the same inequality to struggle against in a suit with a powerful antagonist, that he would have had in contesting with him for an office in the administration. In all trials resting on the voice of popular assemblies, it ever has been, and ever will be found that, *cæteris paribus*, the Aristocrat will defeat the Plebeian.”

These observations are equally just and luminous; and the concluding one in particular, as to the tendency of a corrupt or corruptible judicial multitude to decide in favour of the rich aristocrat in preference to the poor plebeian is, in an author of Mr Bulwer’s prepossessions, highly creditable. The only surprising thing is, how an author who could see so clearly, and express so well, the total incapacity of a multitude to exercise the functions of a judge, should not have perceived that, for the same reason, they are disqualified from taking an active part to any good or useful purpose in the administration of government. In fact, the temptations to the poor to swerve from the path of rectitude or conscience, in the case of government appointments or measures, are just as much the stronger than they are in the judgment of individuals, as the subjects requiring investigation are more intricate or difficult, the objects of contention more important and glittering, and the wealth which will be expended in corruption more abundant. And there, in

truth, lies the eternal objection to democratic institutions, that by withdrawing the people from their right province, that of the censors or controllers of government, and vesting in them the perilous powers of actual administration or direction of affairs, they are necessarily exposed to such a deluge of flattery or corruption, from the eloquent or wealthy candidates for power, as not merely unfits them for the sober or rational discharge of any public duties, but utterly confounds and depraves their moral feelings. It induces, before the time when it would naturally arrive, that universal corruption of opinion which speedily attaches no other test to public actions but success, and leads men to consider the exercise of public duties as nothing but the means of individual elevation or aggrandisement.

We have given some passages from Mr Bulwer from which we dissent, or in the principles of which we differ. Let us now, in justice both to his principles and his powers of description, give a few others, in which we cordially and admiringly assent. The first is the description of the memorable conduct of the Laconian government, upon occasion of the dreadful revolt of the Helots, which followed the great earthquake which nearly overthrew Lacedæmon, and rolled the rock of Mount Taygetus into the streets of Sparta :—

“ An earthquake, unprecedented in its violence, occurred in Sparta. In many places throughout Laconia, the rocky soil was rent asunder. From Mount Taygetus, which overhung the city, and on which the women of Lacedæmon were wont to hold their bacchanalian orgies, huge fragments rolled into the suburbs. The greater portion of the city was absolutely overthrown ; and it is said, probably with exaggeration, that only five houses wholly escaped the shock. This terrible calamity did not cease suddenly as it came ; its concussions were repeated ; it buried alike men and treasure : could we credit Diodorus, no less than 20,000 persons perished in the shock. Thus depopulated, impoverished, and distressed, the enemies whom the cruelty of Sparta nursed within her bosom resolved to seize the moment to execute their vengeance, and consummate her destruction. Under Pausanias, we have seen before that the Helots were already ripe for revolt. The death of that fierce conspirator checked, but did not crush, their designs of freedom. Now was the moment, when Sparta lay in ruins—now was the moment to realise their dreams. From field to field, from village to village, the news of the earthquake became the watchword of revolt. Up rose the Helots : they armed themselves, they poured on—a wild and gathering and relentless multitude, resolved to slay, by the wrath of man, all whom that of nature had yet spared. The earthquake that levelled Sparta rent her chains ; nor did the shock create one chasm so dark and wide as that between the master and the slave.

“ It is one of the sublimest and most awful spectacles in history, that city

in ruins, the earth still trembling, the grim and dauntless soldiery collected amidst piles of death and ruin ; and in such a time, and such a scene, the multitude sensible, not of danger but of wrong ; and rising, not to succour, but to revenge : all that should have disarmed a feebler enmity giving fire to theirs ; the dreadest calamity their blessing, dismay their hope. It was as if the Great Mother herself had summoned her children to vindicate the long-abused, the all-inalienable heritage derived from her ; and the stir of the angry elements was but the announcement of an armed and solemn union between Nature and the Oppressed.

“ Fortunately for Sparta, the danger was not altogether unforeseen. After the confusion and horror of the earthquake, and while the people, dispersed, were seeking to save their effects, Archidamus who, four years before, had succeeded to the throne of Lacedæmon, ordered the trumpets to sound as to arms. That wonderful superiority of man over matter which habit and discipline can effect, and which was ever so visible amongst the Spartans, constituted their safety at that hour. Forsaking the care of their property, the Spartans seized their arms, flocked around their king, and drew up in disciplined array. In her most imminent crisis, Sparta was thus saved. The Helots approached, wild, disorderly, and tumultuous : they came intent only to plunder and to slay ; they expected to find scattered and affrighted foes—they found a formidable army ; their tyrants were still their lords. They saw, paused, and fled, scattering themselves over the country, exciting all they met to rebellion ; and soon, joined with the Messenians—kindred to them by blood and ancient reminiscences of heroic struggles—they seized that same Ithomæ which their hereditary Aristodemus had before occupied with unforgotten valour. This they fortified, and, occupying also the neighbouring lands, declared open war upon their lords. As the Messenians were the more worthy enemy, so the general insurrection is known by the name of the Third Messenian War.”

The incident here narrated of the King of Sparta, amidst the yawning of the earthquake and the ruin of his capital, sounding the trumpets to arms, and the Lacedæmonians assembling in disciplined array around him, is one of the sublimest recorded in history. The pencil of Martin would there find a fit subject for its noblest efforts. We need not wonder that a people capable of such conduct in such a moment, and trained by discipline and habit to such docility in danger, should acquire and maintain supreme dominion in Greece.

The next passage with which we shall gratify our readers, is an eloquent eulogium on a marvellous topic—the unrivalled grace and beauty of the Athenian edifices, erected in the time of Pericles.

“ Then rapidly progressed those glorious fabrics which seemed, as Plutarch gracefully expresses it, endowed with the bloom of a perennial youth. Still, the houses of private citizens remained simple and unadorned ; still were the streets narrow and irregular ; and even centuries afterwards, a stranger entering Athens would not at first have recognised the claims of the mistress of Grecian art. But to the homeliness of her common thoroughfares and private mansions, the magnificence of her public edifices now made a dazzling contrast. The Acropolis that towered above the homes and

thoroughfares of men—a spot too sacred for human habitation—became, to use a proverbial phrase, ‘a City of the Gods.’ The citizen was everywhere to be reminded of the majesty of the STATE—his patriotism was to be increased by the pride in her beauty—his taste to be elevated by the spectacle of her splendour. Thus flocked to Athens all who throughout Greece were eminent in art. Sculptors and architects vied with each other in adorning the young Empress of the Seas; then rose the masterpieces of Phidias, of Callicrates, of Mnesicles, which, even either in their broken remains, or in the feeble copies of imitators less inspired, still command so intense a wonder, and furnish models so immortal. And if, so to speak, their bones and relics excite our awe and envy, as testifying of a lovelier and grander race, which the deluge of time has swept away, what, in that day, must have been their brilliant effect—unmutilated in their fair proportions—fresh in all their lineaments and hues? For their beauty was not limited to the symmetry of arch and column, nor their materials confined to the marbles of Pentelicus and Paros. Even the exterior of the temples glowed with the richest harmony of colours; and was decorated with the purest gold; an atmosphere peculiarly favourable both to the display and the preservation of art, permitted to external pediments and friezes all the minuteness of ornament, all the brilliancy of colours, such as in the interior of Italian churches may yet be seen—vitiated, in the last, by a gaudy and barbarous taste. Nor did the Athenians spare any cost upon the works that were, like the tombs and tripods of their heroes, to be the monuments of a nation to distant ages, and to transmit the most irrefragable proof, ‘that the power of ancient Greece was not an idle legend.’ The whole democracy were animated with the passion of Pericles; and when Phidias recommended marble as a cheaper material than ivory for the great statue of Minerva, it was for that reason that ivory was preferred by the unanimous voice of the assembly. Thus, whether it were extravagance or magnificence, the blame in one case, the admiration in another, rests not more with the minister than the populace. It was, indeed, the great characteristic of those works, that they were entirely the creations of the people: without the people, Pericles could not have built a temple, or engaged a sculptor. The miracles of that day resulted from the enthusiasm of a population yet young, full of the first ardour for the Beautiful, dedicating to the State, as to a mistress, the trophies honourably won, or the treasures injuriously extorted; and uniting the resources of a nation with the energy of an individual, because the toil, the cost, were borne by those who succeeded to the enjoyment and arrogated the glory.”

This is eloquently said. But in looking for the causes of the Athenian supremacy in taste and art, especially sculpture and architecture, we suspect the historic observer must look for higher and more spiritual causes than the mere energy and feverish excitement of democratic institutions. For, admitting that energy and universal exertion are in every age the characteristic of republican states, how did it happen that, in Athens alone, it took so early and decidedly the direction of taste and art? That is the point which constitutes the marvel, as well as the extraordinary perfection which it *at once* acquired. Many other nations in ancient and modern times have been republican,—Corinth, Tyre, Carthage, Sidon, Sardis, Syracuse, Marseilles, Hol-

land, Switzerland, America ; but where shall we find one which produced the Parthenon or the Apollo Belvidere, the Tragedies of Æschylus or the wisdom of Socrates, the thought of Thucydides or the visions of Plato ? How has it happened that those democratic institutions, which in modern times are found to be generally associated only with vulgar manners, urban discord, or commercial desires, should there have elevated the nation in a few years to the highest pinnacle of intellectual glory ; that, instead of Dutch ponderosity or Swiss slowness, of American conceit or Florentine discord, republicanism on the shores of Attica produced the fire of Demosthenes, the grace of Euripides, the narrative of Xenophon, the taste of Phidias ? After the most attentive consideration, we find it impossible to explain this marvel of marvels by the agency merely of human causes ; and are constrained to ascribe the placing of the eye of Greece on the shores of Attica to the same invisible hand which has fixed the wonders of vision in the human forehead.

There are certain starts in human progress, and more especially in the advance of art, which it is utterly hopeless to refer to any other cause but the immediate design and agency of the Almighty. Democratic institutions afford no sort of explanation of them : we see no Parthenons, nor Sophocles, nor Platos in embryo, either in America since its independence, or in France during the Revolution, or in England since the passing of the Reform Bill. When we reflect that taste in Athens, in thirty years after the Persian invasion, had ascended from the infantine rudeness of the Ægina Marbles to the faultless peristyle and matchless sculpture of the Parthenon ; that in modern Italy the art of painting rose in the lifetime of a single individual, who died at the age of thirty-eight, from the stiff outline and hard colouring of Pietro Perrugino to the exquisite grace of Raphael ; and that it was during an age when the barons to the north of the Alps could neither read nor write, and when rushes were strewed on the floors instead of carpets, that the unrivalled sublimity of Gothic Cathedrals was conceived, and the hitherto unequalled skill of their structure attained : we are constrained to admit that a greater power than that of man superintends human affairs, and that, from the rudest and

most unpromising materials, Providence can, at the appointed season, bring forth the greatest and most exalted efforts of human intellect.

As a favourable specimen of our author's powers of military description, no unimportant quality in a historian, we shall gratify our readers by his account of the battle of Plataea, the most vital conflict to the fortunes of the species which occurred in all antiquity, and which we have never elsewhere read in so graphic and animated a form.

"As the troops of Mardonius advanced, the rest of the Persian armament, deeming the task was now not to fight but to pursue, raised their standards and poured forward tumultuously, without discipline or order.

"Pausanias, pressed by the Persian line, and if not of a timorous, at least of an irresolute, temper, lost no time in sending to the Athenians for succour. But when the latter were on their march with the required aid, they were suddenly intercepted by the auxiliary Greeks in the Persian service, and cut off from the rescue of the Spartans.

"The Spartans beheld themselves thus left unsupported with considerable alarm. Yet their force, including the Tegeans and Helots, was 53,000 men. Committing himself to the gods, Pausanias ordained a solemn sacrifice, his whole army awaiting the result, while the shafts of the Persian bowmen poured on them near and fast. But the entrails presented discouraging omens, and the sacrifice was again renewed. Meanwhile the Spartans evinced their characteristic fortitude and discipline—not one man stirring from his ranks until the auguries should assume a more favouring aspect; all harassed, and some wounded, by the Persian arrows, they yet, seeking protection only beneath their broad bucklers, waited with a stern patience the time of their leader and of Heaven. Then fell Callicrates, the stateliest and strongest soldier in the whole army, lamenting, not death, but that his sword was as yet undrawn against the invader.

"And still sacrifice after sacrifice seemed to forbid the battle, when Pausanias, lifting his eyes that streamed with tears, to the temple of Juno, that stood hard by, supplicated the tutelary goddess of Cithæron, that if the fates forbade the Greeks to conquer, they might at least fall like warriors. And while uttering this prayer, the tokens waited for became suddenly visible in the victims, and the augurs announced the promise of coming victory.

"Therewith, the order of battle rang instantly through the army, and, to use the poetical comparison of Plutarch, the Spartan phalanx suddenly stood forth in its strength, like some fierce animal, erecting its bristles and preparing its vengeance for the foe. The ground, broken in many steep and precipitous ridges, and intersected by the Asopus, whose sluggish stream winds over a broad and rushy bed, was unfavourable to the movements of cavalry, and the Persian foot advanced therefore on the Greeks.

"Drawn up in their massive phalanx, the Lacedæmonians presented an almost impenetrable body—sweeping slowly on, compact and serried—while the hot and undisciplined valour of the Persians, more fortunate in the skirmish than the battle, broke itself in a thousand waves upon that moving rock. Pouring on in small numbers at a time, they fell fast round the progress of the Greeks—their armour slight against the strong pikes of Sparta—their courage without skill, their numbers without discipline; still they fought gallantly, even when on the ground seizing the pikes with their naked hands, and with the wonderful agility which still characterises the Oriental

swordsmen, springing to their feet, and regaining their arms, when seemingly overcome—wresting away their enemy's shields, and grappling with them desperately hand to hand.

“Foremost of a band of a thousand chosen Persians, conspicuous by his white charger, and still more by his daring valour, rode Mardonius, directing the attack—fiercer wherever his armour blazed. Inspired by his presence, the Persians fought worthily of their warlike fame, and, even in falling, thinned the Spartan ranks. At length the rash but gallant leader of the Asiatic armies received a mortal wound: his skull was crushed in by a stone from the hand of a Spartan. His chosen band, the boast of the army, fell fighting round him, but his death was the general signal of defeat and flight. Encumbered by their long robes, and pressed by the relentless conquerors, the Persians fled in disorder towards their camp, which was secured by wooden intrenchments, by gates and towers and walls. Here, fortifying themselves as they best might, they contended successfully, and with advantage, against the Lacedæmonians, who were ill skilled in assault and siege.

“Meanwhile, the Athenians obtained the victory on the plains over the Greeks of Mardonius—finding their most resolute enemy in the Thebans—(three hundred of whose principal warriors fell in the field)—and now joined the Spartans at the Persian camp. The Athenians are said to have been better skilled in the art of siege than the Spartans; yet at that time their experience could scarcely have been greater. The Athenians were at all times, however, of a more impetuous temper; and the men who had ‘run to the charge’ at Marathon were not to be baffled by the desperate remnant of their ancient foe. They scaled the walls; they effected a breach through which the Tegeans were the first to rush; the Greeks poured fast and fierce into the camp. Appalled, dismayed, stupified, by the suddenness and greatness of their loss, the Persians no longer sustained their fame; they dispersed themselves in all directions, falling, as they fled, with a prodigious slaughter, so that out of that mighty armament scarce 3000 effected an escape.”

Our limits will admit of only one extract more; but it is on a different subject, and exhibits Mr Bulwer's great powers of criticism in the fields of poetry and romance, with which he has long been familiar, and in which he has deservedly acquired so great a reputation:—

“Summoning before us the external character of the Athenian drama, the vast audience, the unroofed and enormous theatre, the actors themselves enlarged by art above the ordinary proportions of men, the solemn and sacred subjects from which its form and spirit were derived, we turn to *Æschylus*, and behold at once the fitting creator of its grand and ideal personifications. I have said that *Homer* was his original; but a more intellectual age than that of the Grecian epic had arrived, and with *Æschylus* philosophy passed into poetry. The dark doctrine of Fatality imparted its stern and awful interest to the narration of events: men were delineated, not as mere self-acting and self-willed mortals, but as the agents of a destiny inevitable and unseen. The gods themselves are no longer the gods of *Homer*, entering into the sphere of human action for petty motives and for individual purposes—drawing their grandeur, not from the part they perform, but from the descriptions of the poet; they appear now as the oracles or the agents of Fate; they are visitors from another world, terrible and ominous from the warnings which they convey. *Homer* is the creator of the Material poetry—*Æschylus* of the Intellectual. The corporeal and animal sufferings of the Titan in the Epic hell become exalted by Tragedy into the portrait of moral Fortitude defying physical Anguish. The *Prometheus* of *Æschylus*

is the spirit of a god disdainfully subjected to the misfortunes of a man. In reading this wonderful performance, which in pure and sustained sublimity is perhaps unrivalled in the literature of the world, we lose sight entirely of the cheerful Hellenic worship; and yet it is in vain that the learned attempt to trace its vague and mysterious metaphysics to any old symbolical religion of the East. More probably, whatever theological system it shadows forth was rather the gigantic conception of the poet himself, than the imperfect revival of any forgotten creed, or the poetical disguise of any existent philosophy. However this be, it would certainly seem, that, in this majestic picture of the dauntless enemy of Jupiter, punished only for his benefits to man, and attracting all our sympathies by his courage and his benevolence, is conveyed something of disbelief or defiance of the creed of the populace—a suspicion from which Æschylus was not free in the judgment of his contemporaries, and which is by no means inconsonant with the doctrines of Pythagoras.”

Mr Bulwer justifies this warm eulogium by some beautiful translations. We select his animated version of the exquisite passage so well known to scholars, where Clytemnestra describes to the Chorus the progress of the watch-fires which announced to expecting Greece the fall of Troy; a passage perhaps unrivalled in the classical authors in picturesque and vivid images, and which approaches more nearly, though it surpasses in sublimity, Sir Walter Scott's description of the bale-fires which announced to the Lothians a Warden inroad of the English forces:—

“ A gleam—a gleam—from Ida's height,
 By the Fire-god sent, it came;—
 From watch to watch it leapt that light,
 As a rider rode the Flame !
 It shot through the startled sky,
 And the torch of that blazing glory
 Old Lemnos caught on high,
 On its holy promontory.
 And sent it on, the jocund sign,
 To Athos, Mount of Jove divine.
 Wildly the while, it rose from the isle,
 So that the might of the journeying Light
 Skimmed over the back of the gleaming brine !
 Farther and faster speeds it on,
 Till the watch that keep Macistus steep—
 See it burst like a blazing Sun !
 Doth Macistus sleep
 On his tower-clad steep ?
 No ! rapid and red doth the wild fire sweep ;
 It flashes afar, on the wayward stream
 Of the wild Euripus, the rushing beam !
 It rouses the light on Messapion's height,
 And they feed its breath with the withered heath.
 But it may not stay !
 And away—away—
 It bounds in its freshening might.
 Silent and soon,
 Like a broadened moon,
 It passes in sheen Asopus green,
 And bursts on Cithæron grey !

The warder wakes to the Signal-rays,
 And it swoops from the hill with a broader blaze.
 On—on the fiery Glory rode—
 Thy lonely lake, Gorgōpis, glowed—
 To Megara's Mount it came;
 They feed it again,
 And it streams amain—
 A giant beard of Flame!
 The headland cliffs that darkly down
 O'er the Saronic waters frown,
 Are pass'd with the Swift One's lurid stride,
 And the huge rock glares on the glaring tide,
 With mightier march and fiercer power
 It gain'd Arachne's neighbouring tower—
 Thence on our Argive roof its rest it won,
 Of Ida's fire the long-descended Son!
 Bright harbinger of glory and of joy!
 So first and last with equal honour crown'd,
 In solemn feasts the race-torch circles round.—
 And these my heralds!—this my SIGN OF PEACE;
 Lo! while we breathe, the victor lords of Greece
 Stalk, in stern tumult, through the halls of Troy!"

As an example of the defect of which we complained in the early part of this essay of the want of acknowledgment of a Superintending Power, and to avoid the suspicion of injustice in the estimate we have formed of the tendency in this particular of his writings, we shall give an extract. Perhaps there is no event in the history of the world which has been so momentous in its consequences, so vital in its effects, as the repulse of the Persian invasion of Greece by Xerxes, and none in which the superintending agency of an overruling Providence was so clearly evinced. Observe the reflections which Mr Bulwer deduces from this memorable event.

"When the deluge of the Persian arms rolled back to its Eastern bed, and the world was once more comparatively at rest, the continent of Greece rose visibly and majestically above the rest of the civilised earth. Afar in the Latian plains, the infant state of Rome was silently and obscurely struggling into strength against the neighbouring and petty states in which the old Etrurian civilisation was rapidly passing to decay. The genius of Gaul and Germany, yet unredeemed from barbarism, lay scarce known, save where colonised by Greeks, in the gloom of its woods and wastes. The pride of Carthage had been broken by a signal defeat in Sicily; and Gelo, the able and astute tyrant of Syracuse, maintained in a Grecian colony the splendour of the Grecian name.

"The ambition of Persia, still the great monarchy of the world, was permanently checked and crippled; the strength of generations had been wasted, and the immense extent of the empire only served yet more to sustain the general peace, from the exhaustion of its forces. The defeat of Xerxes paralysed the East.

"Thus, Greece was left secure, and at liberty to enjoy the tranquillity it had acquired, and to direct to the arts of peace the novel and amazing energies which had been prompted by the dangers, and exalted by the victories, of war.

“The Athenians, now returned to their city, saw before them the arduous task of rebuilding its ruins, and restoring its wasted lands. The vicissitudes of the war had produced many silent and internal, as well as exterior, changes. Many great fortunes had been broken; and the ancient spirit of the aristocracy had received no inconsiderable shock in the power of new families; the fame of the base-born and democratic Themistocles, and the victories which a whole people had participated, broke up much of the prescriptive and venerable sanctity attached to ancestral names and to particular families. This was salutary to the spirit of enterprise in all classes. The ambition of the great was excited to restore, by some active means, their broken fortunes and decaying influence; the energies of the humbler ranks, already aroused by their new importance, were stimulated to maintain and to increase it. It was the very crisis in which a new direction might be given to the habits and character of a whole people; and to seize all the advantages of that crisis, FATE, in Themistocles, had allotted to Athens a man whose qualities were not only pre-eminently great in themselves, but peculiarly adapted to the circumstances of the time. And, as I have elsewhere remarked, it is indeed the nature and prerogative of free states, to concentrate the popular will into something of the unity of despotism, by producing, one after another, a series of representatives of the wants and exigencies of The Hour—each leading his generation, but only while he sympathises with its will; and either baffling or succeeded by his rivals, not in proportion as he excels or he is outshone in genius, but as he gives, or ceases to give, to the widest range of the legislative power, the most concentrated force of the executive; thus uniting the desires of the greatest number, under the administration of the narrowest possible control; the constitution popular—the government absolute but responsible.”

Now, in this splendid passage is to be seen a luminous specimen of the view taken of the most memorable events in history by the Liberal writers. In his reflections on this heart-stirring event, in his observations on the glorious defeat of the arms of Eastern despotism by the infant efforts of European freedom, there is nothing said of the incalculable consequences dependent on the struggle; nothing on the evident protection afforded by a superintending Providence to the arms of an inconsiderable Republic; nothing on the marvellous adaptation of the character of Themistocles to the mighty duty with which he was charged, that of rolling back from the cradle of civilisation, freedom, and knowledge, the wave of barbaric conquests. It was FATE which raised him up! We cannot admit the justice of such a view of human affairs. We allow nothing to fate, unless that is meant as another way of expressing the decrees of an overruling, all-seeing, and beneficent Intelligence. We see in the defeat of the mighty armament by the arms of a small city on the Attic shore—in the character of its leaders—in the efforts which it made—in the triumphs which it achieved, and the glories which it won—

the clearest evidence of the agency of a Superintending Power, which elicited from the collision of Asiatic ambition with European freedom the wonders of Grecian civilisation, and the marvels of Athenian genius. And it is just because we are fully alive to the important agency of the democratic element in this memorable conflict ; because we see clearly what inestimable blessings, when duly restrained, it is capable of bestowing on mankind ; because we trace in its energy in every succeeding age the expansive force which has urged the blessings of civilisation into the recesses of the earth, that we are the determined enemies of those democratic concessions which entirely destroy the beneficent agency of this powerful element, which permit the vital heat of society to burst forth in ruinous explosions, or tear to atoms the necessary superincumbent masses, and instead of the smiling aspect of early and cherished vegetation, leave only in its track the blackness of desolation and the ruin of nature.*

* It was impossible that a writer of Sir Edward Bulwer's profound thought and original genius should not unite, in the course of his career, with the great and the good of every other age and country, on so vital a subject as the direction by Providence of human affairs ; and accordingly we hail with pleasure evident marks of such a disposition in several of his later works, particularly in the novel of the Caxton Family—one of the most able and original of his many admirable works. We infer from many passages in them, also, that experience has made him less partial to democratic institutions than he was in his earlier years.—[1850.]

ROBERT BRUCE

[BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, DECEMBER 1819]*

"A Freedome is a noble thing ;
Freedome makes man to have liking ;
Freedome all solace to men gives ;
He lives at ease that freely lives."

Barbour's Bruce.

THE discovery of the bones of ROBERT BRUCE, among the ruins of Dunfermline abbey, calls for some observations in a Journal intended to record the most remarkable events, whether of a public or domestic nature, which occur during the period to which it refers ; and it will never, perhaps, be our good fortune to direct the attention of our readers to an event more interesting to the antiquarian or the patriot of Scotland, than the discovery and reinterment of the remains of her greatest hero.

It is satisfactory, in the first place, to know that no doubt can exist about the remains which were discovered being really the bones of Robert Bruce. Historians had recorded that he was interred "debito cum honore in medio Ecclesiæ de Dunfermline ;" but the ruin of the abbey at the time of the Reformation, and the subsequent neglect of the monuments which it contained, had rendered it difficult to ascertain where this central spot really was. Attempts had been made to explore among the ruins for the tomb ; but so entirely was the form of cathedral churches forgotten in this northern part of the island, that the researches were made in a totally different place from the centre of the edifice. At length, in digging the foundations of the new church,

* Written on occasion of the discovery of the remains of Robert Bruce in Dunfermline Abbey.

the workmen came to a tomb, arched over with masonry, and bearing the marks of more than usual care in its construction. Curiosity being attracted by this circumstance, it was suspected that it might contain the remains of the illustrious hero ; and persons of more skill having examined the spot, discovered that it stood *precisely in the centre of the church*, as its form was indicated by the existing ruins. The tomb having been opened in the presence of the Barons of Exchequer, the discovery of the name of King Robert on an iron plate among the rubbish, and the cloth of gold in which the bones were shrouded, left no room to doubt that the long-wished-for grave had at last been discovered ; while the appearance of the skeleton, in which the breast-bone was sawn asunder, afforded a still more interesting proof of its really being the remains of that illustrious hero, whose heart was committed to his faithful associate in arms, and thrown by him on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land amidst the ranks of the enemy, with the sublime expression, "Onwards as thou wast wont, thou fearless heart !"

Such an event demands a temporary pause in the avocations and amusements of life. We feel called on to go back, in imagination, to the distant and barbarous period when the independence of our country was secured by a valour and ability that have never since been equalled ; and, in returning from his recent grave, to take a nearer view of the difficulties which he had to encounter, and the beneficial effects which his unshaken patriotism has produced upon its people. Had we lived in the period when his heroic achievements were fresh in the public recollection, and when the arms of England yet trembled at the name of Bannockburn, we would have dwelt with enthusiasm on his glorious exploits. A nation's gratitude should not relax when the lapse of five subsequent centuries has not produced a rival to his patriotism and valour ; and when this long period has served only to develop the blessings which they have conferred upon his country.

The power of England, against which it was his lot incessantly to struggle, was, perhaps, the most formidable which then existed in Europe. The native valour of her people, distinguished even under the weakest reign, was then led on and animated by a warlike monarch and a numerous and

valiant feudal nobility. That bold and romantic spirit of enterprise which led the Norman arms to the throne of England, and enabled Roger de Hauteville, with thirty followers, to win the crown of the two Sicilies, still animated the English nobles ; and to this hereditary spirit was added the remembrance of the matchless glories which their arms had acquired in the wars of Palestine. The barons who were arrayed against Robert Bruce, were the descendants of those iron warriors who combated for Christendom under the wall of Acre, and defeated the whole Saracen strength in the battle of Ascalon ; the banners that were unfurled for the conquest of Scotland were those which had waved victorious over the arms of Saladin ; and the sovereign who led them, bore the crown that had been worn by Richard in the Holy Wars, and wielded in his sword the terror of that mighty name, at which even the accumulated hosts of Asia were appalled.

Nor were the resources of England less formidable for maintaining and nourishing the war. The prosperity which had grown up with the equal laws of our Saxon ancestors, and which the tyranny of the early Norman kings had never completely extinguished, had revived and spread under the wise and beneficent reigns of Henry II. and Edward I. The legislative wisdom of the last monarch had given to the English law greater improvements than it ever received in any subsequent reigns, while his heroic valour had subdued the rebellious spirit of his barons, and trained their united strength to submission to the throne. The acquisition of Wales had removed the only weak point of his wide dominion, and added a cruel and savage race to the already formidable mass of his armies. The navy of England already ruled the seas, and was prepared to carry ravage and desolation over the wide and defenceless Scottish coast ; while a hundred thousand men, armed in the magnificent array of feudal war, and led on by the ambition of a feudal nobility, poured into a country which seemed destined only to be their prey.

But most of all, in the ranks of this army were found the intrepid YEOMANRY of England ; that peculiar and valuable body of men which has, in every age, contributed as much to the stability of the English character, as the celebrity of

the English arms, and which then composed those terrible *archers*, whose prowess rendered them so formidable to all the armies of Europe. These men, whose valour was warmed by the consciousness of personal freedom, and whose strength was nursed among the enclosed fields and green pastures of English liberty, conferred, till the discovery of firearms rendered their personal acquirements of so much less avail, a matchless advantage on the English armies. The troops of no other nation could produce a body of men in the least comparable to them either in strength, discipline, or individual valour; and such was the dreadful efficacy with which they used their weapons, that not only did they mainly contribute to the triumphs of Cressy and Azincour, but at Poitiers and Homildon Hill they alone gained the victory, with hardly any assistance from the feudal tenantry.

These troops were well known to the Scottish soldiers, and had established their superiority over them in many bloody battles, in which the utmost efforts of undisciplined valour had been found unavailing against their practised discipline and superior equipment. The very names of the barons who headed them were associated with an unbroken career of conquest and renown, and can hardly be read yet without a feeling of national exultation.

“ Names that to fear were never known,
 Bold Norfolk's Earl de Brotherton,
 And Oxford's famed De Verre;
 Ross, Montague, and Manly came,
 And Courtney's pride, and Percy's fame,
 Names known too well in Scotland's war,
 At Falkirk, Methven, and Dunbar,
 Blazed broader yet in after years,
 At Cressy red, and fell Poitiers.”

Against this terrible force, before which, in the succeeding reign, the military power of France was compelled to bow, Bruce had to array the scanty troops of a barren land, and the divided forces of a turbulent nobility. Scotland was, in his time, fallen low indeed from that state of peace and prosperity in which she was found at the first invasion of Edward I., and on which so much light has been thrown by the industrious research of our times.*—The disputed succession had sown the seeds of unextinguishable jealousies

* Chalmers' *Caledonia*, vol. i.

among the nobles ; the gold of England had corrupted many to betray their country's cause ; and the fatal ravages of English invasion had desolated the whole plains from which resources for carrying on the war could be drawn. All the heroic valour, the devoted patriotism, and the personal prowess of Wallace had been unable to stem the torrent of English invasion ; and, when he died, the whole nation seemed to sink under the load against which his unexampled fortitude had alone enabled it to struggle. These unhappy jealousies among the nobles, to which his downfall was owing, still continued, and almost rendered hopeless any attempt to combine their forces ; while the thinned population and ruined husbandry of the country seemed to prognosticate nothing but total extirpation from a continuance of the war. Nor was the prospect less melancholy from a consideration of the combats which had taken place. The short spear and light shield of the Scotch had been found utterly unavailing against the iron panoply and powerful horses of the English Barons ; while the hardy and courageous mountaineers perished in vain under the dreadful tempest of the English archery.

What, then, must have been the courage of that youthful prince, who, after having been driven for shelter to an island on the north of Ireland, could venture, with only forty followers, to raise the standard of independence in the west of Scotland, against the accumulated force of this mighty power ?—what the resources of that understanding, which, though intimately acquainted, from personal service, with the tried superiority of the English arms, could foresee, in his barren and exhausted country, the means of combating them ?—what the ability of that political conduct which could reunite the jarring interests, and smother the deadly feuds, of the Scottish nobles ?—and what the capacity of that noble warrior, who, in the words of the contemporary historian,* could “unite the prowess of the first knight to the conduct of the greatest general of his age,” and was able, in the space of six years, to raise the Scottish arms from the lowest point of depression to such a pitch of glory, that even the redoubted archers and haughty chivalry of England fled at the sight of the Scottish banner ? †

* Froissart.

† Walsing. p. 106. Mon. Malms. p. 152, 153.

Nor was it only in the field that the great and patriotic conduct of Robert Bruce was displayed. In the endeavour to restore the almost ruined fortunes of his country, and to heal the wounds which a war of unparalleled severity had brought upon its people, he exhibited the same wise and beneficent policy. Under his auspicious rule, husbandry revived, arts were encouraged, and the turbulent barons were awed into subjection. Scotland recovered, during his administration, in a great measure, from the devastation that had preceded it; and the peasants, forgetting the stern warrior in the beneficent monarch, long remembered his sway, under the name of the "good King Robert's reign."

But the greatness of his character appeared most of all from the events that occurred after his death. When the capacity with which he and his worthy associates, Randolph and Douglas, had counterbalanced the superiority of the English arms, was withdrawn, the fabric which they had supported fell to the ground. In the very first battle which was fought after his death at Homildon Hill, a larger army than that which conquered at Bannockburn was overthrown by the archers of England, without a single knight couching his spear. Never, at any subsequent period, was Scotland able to withstand the more powerful arms of the English yeomanry. Thenceforward, her military history is little more than a melancholy catalogue of continued defeats, occasioned rather by treachery on the part of her nobles, or incapacity in her generals, than by any defect of valour in her soldiers; and the independence of the monarchy was maintained rather by the terror which the name of Bruce and the remembrance of Bannockburn had inspired, and the wise system of national defence which he had prescribed, than by the achievements of any of the successors to his throne.*

The merits of Robert Bruce, as a warrior, are very generally acknowledged; and the eyes of Scottish patriotism turn with the greater exultation to his triumphs, from the contrast which their splendour affords to the barren and humiliating annals of the subsequent reigns. But the important CONSEQUENCES of his victories are not sufficiently appreciated. While all admit the purity of the motives by

* *Henry's Britain*, vol. vii. 372.

which he was actuated, there are many who lament the consequences of his success, and perceive in it the source of those continued hostilities between England and Scotland which brought such incalculable calamities upon both countries, and from which the latter has only within half a century begun to recover. Better would it have been, it is said, for the prosperity of this country, if, like Wales, she had passed at once under the dominion of the English government, and received, five centuries ago, the present of that liberty which she so entirely lost during her struggles for national independence, and which nothing but her subsequent union with a free people has enabled her to obtain.

There is something, we think, *a priori*, improbable in this supposition, that, from the assertion of her independence under Robert Bruce, Scotland has received any injury. The instinct to maintain the national independence, and resist aggression from foreign powers, is so universally implanted among mankind, that it may well be doubted whether an obedience to its impulse is likely in any case to produce injurious effects. In fact, subjugation by a foreign power is itself a greater calamity than any benefits with which it is accompanied can ever compensate ; because, in the very act of receiving them *by force*, there is implied an entire dereliction of all that is valuable in political blessings,—a security that they will remain permanent. There is no example, perhaps, to be found in the history of mankind, of political freedom being either effectually conferred by a sovereign in gift, or communicated by the force of foreign arms ; but as liberty is the greatest blessing which man can enjoy, so it seems to be the law of nature that it should be the reward of intrepidity and energy alone ; and that it is by the labour of his hands, and the sweat of his brow, that he is to earn his freedom as well as his subsistence.

Least of all are such advantages to be anticipated from the conquest of a *free* people. That the dominion of free states over conquered countries is always more tyrannical than that of any other form of government, has been observed ever since the birth of liberty in the Grecian states, by all who have been so unfortunate as to be subjected to their rule. If we except the Roman republic, whose wise and

beneficent policy is so entirely at variance with everything else which we observe in human affairs, that we are almost disposed to impute it to a special interposition of divine providence, there is no free state in ancient or modern times whose government towards the countries whom it subdued has not been of the most oppressive description. We are accustomed to speak of the maternal government of free nations ; but towards their subject provinces, it is generally the cruel tyranny of the mother who oppresses her stepchildren to favour her own offspring.

Nor is it difficult to perceive the reason why a popular government is naturally inclined, in the general case, to severity towards its dependencies. A single monarch looks to the *revenue* alone of the countries whom he has subdued ; and as *it* necessarily rises with the prosperity which they enjoy, *his* obvious interest is to pursue the measures best calculated to secure it. But in republics, or in those free governments where the popular voice exercises a decided control, the leading men of the state *themselves* look to the *property* of the *subject country* as the means of their individual exaltation. Confiscations accordingly are multiplied, with a view to gratify the people or nobles of the victorious country with grants of the confiscated lands. Hatred and animosity are thus engendered between the ruling government and their subject provinces ; and this, in its time, gives rise to new confiscations, by which the breach between the higher and lower orders is rendered irreparable. Whoever is acquainted with the history of the dominion which the Athenian and Syracusan populace held over their subject cities ; with the government of Genoa, Venice, and Florence, in modern times ; or with the sanguinary rule which England exercised over Ireland during the three centuries which followed her subjugation, will know that this statement is not overcharged.

On principle, therefore, and judging by the experience of past times, there is no room to doubt that Bruce, in opposing the conquest of Scotland by the English arms, was doing what the real interest of his country required ; and that how incalculable soever may be the blessings which she has since received by a union, on *equal terms*, with her southern neighbour, the result would have been very different

had she entered into that government on the footing of *involuntary subjugation*. In fact, it is not difficult to perceive what would have been the policy which England would have pursued towards this country, had she prevailed in the contest for the Scottish throne ; and it is by following out the consequences of such an event, and tracing its probable influence on the condition of our population at this day, that we can alone appreciate the immense obligations we owe to our forefathers, who fought and died on the field of Bannockburn.

Had the English, then, prevailed in the war with Robert Bruce, and finally succeeded in establishing their long-wished-for dominion in this country, it cannot be doubted that their first measure would have been to dispossess a large portion of the nobles who had so obstinately maintained the war against them, and to substitute their own barons in their room. The pretended rebellion of Scotland against the so called legitimate authority of Edward would have furnished a plausible pretext for such a proceeding ; while policy would of course have suggested it as the most efficacious means, both of restraining the turbulent and hostile spirit of the natives, and of gratifying the great barons by whose force they had been subdued. In fact, many such confiscations and grants of the lands to English nobles actually took place during the time that Edward I. maintained his authority within the Scottish territory.

The consequences of such a measure are very obvious. The dispossessed proprietors would have nourished the most violent and inveterate animosity against their oppressors ; and the tenantry on their estates, attached by feudal and clannish affection to their ancient masters, would have joined in any scheme for their restoration. The seeds of continual discord and hatred would thus have been sown between the lower orders and the existing proprietors of the soil. On the other hand, the great English barons, to whom the confiscated lands were assigned, would naturally have preferred the society of their own country, and the security of their native castles, to the unproductive soil and barbarous tribes of their northern estates. They would in consequence have relinquished these estates to factors or agents, and, without ever thinking of residing among a people by whom they

were detested, have sought only to increase, by rigorous exactions, the revenue which they could derive from their labour.

In progress of time, however, the natural fervour of the Scottish people, their hereditary animosities against England, the exertions of the dispossessed proprietors, and the oppression of the English authorities, would in all probability have occasioned a revolt in Scotland. They would naturally have chosen for such an undertaking the moment when the English forces were engaged in the wars of France; and, in such circumstances, it is not to be doubted that the English would have been unable to withstand the resistance to their arms, which French gold and emissaries would also have sedulously stimulated through the country. And if the authority of England was again re-established, new and more extensive confiscations would of course have followed; the English nobles would have been gratified by farther grants of the most considerable estates to the north of the Tweed, and the bonds of military subjection would have been tightened on the unfortunate people who were subdued.

The continuance of the wars between France and England, by presenting favourable opportunities to the Scotch to revolt, combined with the temptation which the remoteness of their situation and the strength of their country afforded, would have induced continual civil wars between the peasantry and their foreign masters, until the resources of the country were entirely exhausted, and the people sank in hopeless submission under the power that oppressed them.

But, in the progress of these wars, an evil of a far greater and more permanent description would naturally arise, than either the loss of lives or the devastation of property which they occasioned. In the course of the protracted contest, the LANDED PROPERTY OF THE COUNTRY WOULD ENTIRELY HAVE CHANGED MASTERS; and in place of being possessed by natives of the country permanently settled on their estates, and attached by habit and common interest to the labourers of the ground, it would have come into the hands of foreign noblemen, forced upon the country by military power, hated by the natives, residing always on their Eng-

lish estates, and regarding the people of Scotland as barbarians, whom it was alike impolitic to approach, and necessary to curb by despotic power.

But while such would be the feelings and policy of the English proprietors, the stewards whom they appointed to manage their Scotch estates, at a distance from home, and surrounded by a fierce and hostile population, would have felt the necessity of some assistance, to enable them to maintain their authority, or turn to any account the estates which were committed to their care. Unable to procure military assistance to enforce the submission of every district, or collect the rents of every property, they would of necessity have looked to some method of conciliating the people of the country ; and such a method would naturally suggest itself in the attachment which the people bore to the families of original landlords, and the consequent means which they possessed of swaying their refractory dispositions. These unhappy men, on the other hand, despairing of the recovery of their whole estates, would be glad of an opportunity of regaining any part of them, and eagerly embrace any proposal by which such a compromise might be effected. The sense of mutual dependence, in short, would have led to an arrangement, by which the estates of the English nobles *were to be subset to the Scottish proprietors for a fixed yearly rent*, and they would take upon themselves the task to which they alone were competent, of recovering the rents from the actual cultivators of the soil.

As the numbers of the people increased, however, and the value of the immense farms which had been thus granted to the descendants of their original proprietors was enhanced, the task of collecting rents over so extensive a district would have become too great for any individual, and the increased wealth which he had acquired from the growth of his tenantry would have led him to dislike the personal labour with which it would be attended. These great tenants, in consequence, would have subset their vast possessions to an inferior set of occupiers, who might each superintend the collection of the rents within his own farm, and have an opportunity of acquiring a personal acquaintance with the labourers by whom it was to be cultivated. As the number of the people increased, the same process would be repeated by the

different tenants on their respective farms; and thus there would have sprung up universally in Scotland a class of MIDDLE MEN between the proprietor and the actual cultivator of the soil.

While these changes went on, the condition of the people, oppressed by a series of successive masters, each of whom required to live by their labour, and wholly debarred from obtaining any legal redress for their grievances, would have gradually sunk. Struggling with a barren soil, and a host of insatiable oppressors, they could never have acquired any ideas of comfort, or indulged in any hopes of rising in the world. They would, in consequence, have adopted that species of food which promised to afford the greatest nourishment for a family from the smallest space of ground; and from the universality of this cause, the POTATO would have become the staple food of the country.

The landed proprietors, on the other hand, who are the natural protectors, and ought always to be the best encouragers of the people on their estates, would have shrunk from the idea of leaving their English possessions, where they were surrounded by an affectionate and comfortable tenantry, where riches and plenty sprang from the natural fertility of the soil, and where power and security were derived from their equal law, to settle in a northern climate, amongst a people by whom they were abhorred, and where law was unable to restrain the licentiousness, or reform the barbarism of the inhabitants. They would in consequence have generally become ABSENTEE PROPRIETORS; and not only denied to the Scottish people the incalculable advantages of a resident body of landed gentlemen; but, by their influence in Parliament, and their animosity towards their northern tenantry, prevented any legislative measure being pursued for their relief.

In such circumstances, it seems hardly conceivable that arts or manufactures should have made any progress in this country. But if, in spite of the obstacles which the unfavourable climate and unhappy political circumstances of the country presented, manufactures should have begun to spring up amongst us, they would speedily have been checked by the commercial jealousy of their more powerful southern rivals. Bills would have been brought into Parliament, as

was actually done in regard to a neighbouring island, proceeding on the preamble, "that it is expedient that the Scottish manufactures should be discouraged;" and the prohibition of sending their goods into the richer market of England, whither the whole wealth of the country was already drawn, would have annihilated the infant efforts of manufacturing industry.

Nor would the Reformation, which, as matters stand, has been of such essential service to this country, have been, on the hypothesis which we are pursuing, a lesser source of suffering, or a greater bar to the improvement of the people. From being embraced by their English landlords, the Reformed Religion would have been hateful to the peasants of Scotland; the Catholic priests would have sought refuge among them, from the persecution to which they were exposed in their native seats; and both would have been strengthened in their hatred to those persons to whom their common misfortune was owing. Religious hatred would thus have combined with all the previous circumstances of irritation, to increase the rancour between the proprietors of the soil and the labouring classes in this country; and from the circumstance of the latter adhering to the proscribed religion, they would have been rendered yet more incapable of procuring redress for their grievances in a legislative form.

Had the English, therefore, succeeded in subduing Scotland in the time of Robert Bruce, and in maintaining their authority from that period, we think it not going too far to assert that the people of this country would have been now *in the lowest state of political degradation*: that religious discussion and civil rancour would have mutually exasperated the higher and lower orders against each other; that the landed proprietors would have been permanently settled in the victorious country; that everywhere a class of middlemen would have been established to grind and ruin the labours of the poor; that manufactures would have been extinguished, and the country covered with a numerous and indigent population, idle in their habits, ignorant in their ideas, ferocious in their manners, professing a religion which held them in bondage, and clinging to prejudices from which their ruin must ensue.

Is it said that this is mere *conjecture*, and that nothing in the history of English government warrants us in concluding that such would have been the consequence of the establishment of their dominion in this country? Alas! it is *not conjecture*. The history of IRELAND affords too melancholy a confirmation of the truth of the positions which we have advanced, and of the reality of the deduction which we have pursued. In that deduction we have not reasoned on hypothesis or conjecture. Every step which we have hinted at *has there been taken*; every consequence which we have suggested *has there ensued*. Those acquainted with the history of that unhappy country, or who have studied its present condition, will recognise in the conjectural history which we have sketched, of what *would* have followed the annexation of this country to England in the time of Edward II., the *real history* of what HAS FOLLOWED its subjugation in the time of Henry II., and perceive, in the causes which we have pointed out as what would have operated upon our people, the *real causes* of the misery and wretchedness in which its population is involved.

Nor is the example of the peaceful submission of Wales to the dominion of England any authority against this view of the subject. Wales is so inconsiderable in comparison to England; it comes so completely in contact with its richest provinces, and is so enveloped by its power, that, when once subdued, all thought of resistance or revolt became hopeless. That mountainous region, therefore, fell as quietly and as completely into the arms of England as if it had been one of the Heptarchy, which in process of time was incorporated with the English monarchy. Very different is the situation of Scotland, where the comparative size of the country, the fervid spirit of the inhabitants, the remoteness of its situation, and the strength of its mountains, continually must have suggested the hope of successful revolt, and as necessarily occasioned the calamitous consequences which we have detailed. The rebellion of Owen Glendower is sufficient to convince us that nothing but the utter insignificance of Wales, compared to England, prevented the continual revolt of the Welsh people, and the consequent introduction of all those horrors which have followed the establishment of English dominion among the inhabitants of Ireland.

Do we, then, rejoice in the prosperity of our country? Do we exult at the celebrity which it has acquired in arts and in arms? Do we duly estimate the blessings which it has long enjoyed from equal law and personal freedom? Do we feel grateful for the intelligence, the virtue, and the frugality of our peasantry, and acknowledge with thankfulness the practical beneficence and energetic spirit of our landed proprietors? Let us turn to the grave of Robert Bruce, and feel as we ought the inexpressible gratitude due to him as the remote author of all these blessings. But for his bold and unconquerable spirit, Scotland might have shared with Ireland the horrors of English conquest; and, instead of exulting now in the prosperity of our country, the energy of our peasantry, and the patriotic spirit of our resident landed proprietors, we might have been deploring with her an absent nobility, an oppressive tenantry, a bigoted and ruined people.

It was therefore, in truth, a memorable day for this country when the remains of this great prince were rediscovered amidst the ruins in which they had so long been hid; when the arm which slew Henry de Bohun was reinterred in the land which it had saved from slavery; and the head which had directed the triumph of Bannockburn was consigned to the dust, after five centuries of grateful remembrance and experienced obligation. It is by thus appreciating the merits of departed worth that similar virtues in future are to be called forth; and by duly feeling the consequences of heroic resistance in time past, that the spirit is to be excited by which the future fortunes of the state are to be maintained.

In these observations we have no intention, as truly we have no desire, to depreciate the incalculable blessings which this country has derived from her union with England. We feel, as strongly as any can do, the immense advantage which this measure brought to the wealth, the industry, and the spirit of Scotland. We are proud to acknowledge that it is in some degree to the efforts of English patriotism that we owe the establishment of liberty in our civil code; and to the influence of English example, the diffusion of a free spirit among our people. But it is just because we are duly impressed with these feelings that we recur with such grate-

ful pride to the patriotic resistance of Robert Bruce ; it is because we feel that we should be unworthy of sharing in English liberty unless we had struggled for our own independence, and incapable of participating in its benefits unless we had shown that we were capable of acquiring it. Nor are we ashamed to own that it is the spirit which English freedom has awakened that first enabled us fully to appreciate the importance of the efforts which our ancestors made in resisting their dominion ; and that but for the Union on equal terms with that power, we would have been ignorant of the debt which we owed to those who saved us from its subjugation. In our national fondness, therefore, for the memory of Robert Bruce, the English should perceive the growth of those principles from which their own unequalled greatness has arisen ; nor should they envy the glory of the field of Bannockburn, when we appeal to it as our best title to be quartered in their arms.

“ Yet mourn not, land of Fame !
Though ne’er the leopards on thy shield
Retreated from so sad a field
Since Norman William came.
Oft may thine annals justly boast,
Of battles there by Scotland lost :
Grudge not her victory,
When for her freeborn rights she strove,
Rights dear to all who freedom love,
To none so dear as thee.”

NATIONAL MONUMENTS

[BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, JULY 1819] *

THE history of mankind, from its earliest period to the present moment, is fraught with the proofs of one general truth, that it is in *small states*, and in consequence of the emulation and ardent spirit which they develop, that the human mind arrives at its greatest perfection, and that the freest scope is afforded both to the grandeur of moral, and the brilliancy of intellectual character. It is to the citizens of *small* republics that we are indebted both for the greatest discoveries which have improved the condition or elevated the character of mankind, and for the noblest examples of private and public virtue with which the page of history is adorned. It was in the republics of ancient Greece, and in consequence of the emulation which was excited amongst her rival cities, that the beautiful arts of poetry, sculpture, and architecture were first brought to perfection ; and whilst the genius of the human race was slumbering in the innumerable multitudes of the Persian and Indian monarchies, the single city of Athens produced a succession of great men, whose works have improved and delighted the world in every succeeding age. While the vast feudal monarchies of Europe were buried in ignorance and barbarism, the little states of Florence, Bologna, Rome, and Venice were far advanced in the career of arts and in the acquisition of knowledge ; and at this moment, the traveller neglects the boundless but unknown tracts of Germany and France, to visit the tombs of Raphael, and Michael Angelo, and Tasso, to dwell in a country where every city and every landscape reminds him

* Written when the design to be adopted in the National Monument of Edinburgh occupied a large share of the public attention.

of the greatness of human genius, or the perfection of human taste. It is from the same cause that the earlier history of the Swiss republic exhibits a firmness and grandeur of political character which we search for in vain in the annals of the great monarchies by which it is surrounded, and that the classical pilgrim forgets the splendour of the Eternal City in his devotion to the spirit of its early republic; and sees not in the ruins which surround him the remains of imperial Rome, the mistress and the capital of the world; but of Rome when struggling with Corioli and Veii; of Rome when governed by Regulus and Cincinnatus—and traces the scene of her infant wars with the Latian tribes with a pious interest, which all the pomp and magnificence of her subsequent history has not been able to excite.

Examples of this kind have often led historians to consider the situation of small republics as that of all others most adapted to the exaltation and improvement of mankind. To minds of an ardent and enthusiastic cast, who delight in the contemplation of human genius, or in the progress of public improvement, the brilliancy and splendour of such little states forms the most delightful of all objects; and accordingly, the greatest of living historians, in his history of the Italian republics, has expressed a decided opinion that in no other situation is such scope afforded to the expansion of the human mind, or such facility afforded to the progressive improvement of our species.

On the other hand, it is not to be concealed, that such little dynasties are accompanied by many circumstances of continued and aggravated distress. Their small dimensions, and the jealousies which subsist betwixt them, not only furnish the subject of continual disputes, but aggravate to an incredible degree the miseries and devastations of war. Between such states, it is not conducted with the dignity and in the spirit which characterises the efforts of great monarchies, but rather with the asperity and rancour which belongs to a civil contest. While the frontiers only of a great monarchy suffer from the calamities of war, its devastations extend to the very heart of smaller states. Insecurity and instability frequently mark the internal state of these republics; and the activity which the historian admires in their citizens, is too often employed in mutually pillaging

and destroying each other, or in disturbing the tranquillity of the state. It is hence that the sunny slopes of the Apennines are everywhere crowned by castellated villages, indicating the universality of the ravages of war among the Italian States in former times ; and that the architecture of Florence and Genoa still bears the character of that massy strength which befitted the period when every noble palace was an independent fortress, and when war, tumult, and violence reigned for centuries within their walls ; while the open villages and straggling cottages of England bespeak the security with which her peasants have reposed under the shadow of her redoubted power.

The universality of this fact has led many wise and good men to regard small states as the prolific source of human suffering ; and to conclude that all the splendour, whether in arts or in science, with which they are surrounded, is dearly bought at the expense of the peace and tranquillity of the great body of the people. To such men it appears that the periods of history on which the historian dwells, or which have been marked by extraordinary genius, are not those in which the greatest public happiness has been enjoyed, but that it is to be found rather under the quiet and inglorious government of a great and pacific empire.

Without pretending to determine which of these opinions is the best founded, it is more important for our present purpose to observe, that the union of the three kingdoms promises to combine for this country the advantages of both these forms of government, without the evils to which either is exposed. While her insular situation, and the union and energy of her people, secure for Great Britain peace and tranquillity within her own bounds, the rivalry of the different nations of whom the empire is composed, promises, if properly directed, to animate her people with the ardour and enterprise which have hitherto been supposed to spring only from the collision of smaller states.

Towards the accomplishment of this most desirable object, however, it is indispensable that each nation should preserve the remembrance of its own distinct origin, and look to the glory of *its own people*, with an anxious and peculiar care. It is quite right that the Scotch should exult with

their aged sovereign in the name of Britain ; and that, when considered with reference to foreign states, Britain should exhibit a united whole, intent only upon upholding and extending the glory of that empire which her united forces have formed. But it is equally indisputable that her ancient metropolis should not degenerate into a provincial town ; and that an independent nation, once the rival of England, should remember with pride the peculiar glories by which her people have been distinguished. Without this, the whole good effects of the rivalry of the two nations will be entirely lost ; and the genius of her different people, in place of emulating and improving each other, will be drawn into one centre, where all that is original and characteristic will be lost in the overwhelming influence of prejudice and fashion.

Such an event would be an incalculable calamity to the metropolis, and to the genius of this country. It is this catastrophe which Fletcher of Salton so eloquently foretold, when he opposed the union with England in the Scottish Parliament. Edinburgh would then become, like Lyons, or Toulouse, or Venice, a provincial town, supported only by the occasional influx of the gentlemen in its neighbourhood, and the courts of law which have their seat within its walls. The city and the nation which have produced David Hume and Adam Smith, Robert Burns and Thomas Campbell, Reid and Stewart, Principal Robertson and Walter Scott, would cease to exist ; and the traveller would repair to her classical scenes, as he now does to Venice or Ferrara, to lament the decay of human genius which follows the union of independent states.

Nor would such an event be less injurious to the general progress of science and arts throughout the empire. It is impossible to doubt that the circumstance of Scotland being a separate kingdom, and maintaining a rivalry with England, has done incalculable good to both countries ; that it has given rise to a succession of great men, whose labours have enlightened and improved mankind, who would not otherwise have influenced the progress of knowledge. Who can say what would have been the present condition of England in philosophy or science, if she had not been stimulated by the splendid progress which Scotland was

making? And who can calculate the encouragement which Scottish genius has derived from the generous applause which England has always lavished upon her works? As Scotchmen, we rejoice in the exaltation and eminence of our own country; but we rejoice not less sincerely in the literary celebrity of our sister kingdom; not only from the interest which, as citizens of the united empire, we feel in the celebrity of any of its members, but as affording the secret pledges of the continued and progressive splendour of our own country.

It is impossible, however, to contemplate the effects of the union of the two kingdoms, from which this country has derived such incalculable benefits in its national wealth and domestic industry, without perceiving that in time, at least, a corresponding *decay* may take place in its literary and philosophic acquirements. There are few examples in the history of mankind of an independent kingdom being incorporated with another of greater magnitude, without losing, in process of time, the national eminence, whether in arts or in arms, to which it had arrived. A rare succession of great men in our universities, indeed, and an extraordinary combination of talents in the works of imagination, has hitherto prevented this effect from taking place. But who can insure a continuance of men of such extraordinary genius, to keep alive the torch of science in our northern regions? Is it not to be apprehended that the attractions of wealth, of power, and of fashion, which have so long drawn our nobles and higher classes to the seat of government, may, ere long, exercise a similar influence upon our national genius, and that the melancholy catastrophe which Fletcher of Salton described, with all its fatal consequences, may be, even now, approaching to its accomplishment?

Whatever can arrest this lamentable progress, and fix down, in a permanent manner, the genius of Scotland to its own shores, confers not only an incalculable benefit upon this country, but upon the united empire of which it forms a part. The erection of the *National Monument* in Edinburgh seems calculated, in a most remarkable manner, to assist this most desirable object.

To those, indeed, who have not been in the habit of attending to the influence of animating recollections upon

the development of everything that is great or generous in human character, it may appear that the effects we anticipate from this building are visionary and chimerical. But when a train is ready laid, a spark will set it in flames. The Scotch have always been a proud and an ardent people; and the spirit which animated their forefathers, in this respect, is not yet extinct. Upon a people so disposed, it is difficult to estimate the effects which a splendid edifice, filled with monuments to the greatest men whom the country can boast, may ultimately produce. It will give stability and consistence to the national pride; a feeling which, when properly directed, is the surest foundation of national eminence. It will perpetuate the remembrance of the brave and independent Scottish nation; a feeling, of all others, the best suited to animate the exertions of her remotest descendants. It will teach her inhabitants to look to their own country for the scene of their real glory; and while Ireland laments the absence of a nobility insensible to her fame, it will be the boast of this country to have erected, on her own shores, a monument worthy of her people's glory, and to have disdained to follow merely the triumphs of that nation, whose ancestors they have ere now vanquished in the field; and with whom, after centuries of checkered hostility, they entered into a union on terms of honourable equality.

Who has not felt the sublime impression which the interior of Westminster Abbey produces, where the poets, the philosophers, and the statesmen of England, "sleep with their kings, and dignify the scene?" Who has viewed the church of St Croce at Florence, and seen the tombs of Galileo, and Machiavelli, and Michael Angelo, and Alfieri, under one sacred roof, without feeling their hearts swell with the remembrance of her ancient glory? And, among the multitudes who will visit the sacred pile that is to perpetuate the memory of Scottish greatness, how many may there be whom so sublime a spectacle may rouse to a sense of their native powers, and animate with the pride of their country's renown; and in whom the remembrance of the "illustrious of ancient days" may awaken the noble feeling of Correggio, when he contemplated the works of the Roman masters—"I too am a painter!"

Nor do we think that such a monument could produce effects of less importance upon the military character and martial spirit of the Scottish people in future ages. The memory of the glorious achievements of our age, indeed, will never die, and the page of history will perpetuate, to the higher orders, the recollection of the events which have cast so unrivalled a splendour over the British nation, in the commencement of the nineteenth century. But the study of history is confined to few, comparatively speaking, of the population of a country ; and the knowledge which it imparts can never extend universally to the poorer class, from whom the materials of an army are to be drawn. In the ruder and earlier periods of society, indeed, the traditions of warlike events are preserved for a series of years, by the romantic ballads, which are cherished by a simple and primitive people. The nature of the occupations in which they are principally engaged is favourable to the preservation of such heroic recollections. But in the state of society in which we live, it is impossible that the record of past events can be thus engraven on the hearts of a nation. The uniformity of employment in which the lower orders are engaged—the severe and unremitting toil to which they are exposed—the division of labour which fixes them down to one limited and unchanging occupation—the large proportion of them who are absorbed in the occupations, the pleasures, and the vices of cities, all contribute to destroy those ancient traditions, on the preservation of which so much of the martial spirit of a people depends. The peasantry in the remoter parts of Scotland can still recount some of the exploits, and dwell with enthusiasm on the adventures, of Bruce or Wallace ; but you will search in vain among the English poor for any record of the victories of Cressy or Azincour, of Blenheim or Ramillies. And even among the higher orders, the experience of every day is sufficient to convince us that the remembrance of ancient glory, though not forgotten, may cease to possess any material influence on the character of our people. The historian, indeed, may recount the glorious victories of Vittoria, Trafalgar, and Waterloo, and their names may be familiar to every ear ; but the name may be remembered when the heart-stirring spirit which they should awaken is no longer

felt. For a time, and during the lifetime of the persons who were distinguished in these events, they form a leading subject of the public attention ; but when a new generation succeeds, and new cares, and fashions, and events occupy the attention of the nation, the practical effects of these triumphs is lost, how indelibly soever they may be recorded in the pages of history. The victories of Poitiers, and Blenheim, and Minden, had long ago demonstrated the superiority of the English over the French troops ; but though this fact appeared unquestionable to those who studied the history of past events, everybody knows with what serious apprehension a French invasion was contemplated in this country, within our own recollection.

It is of incalculable importance, therefore, that some means should be taken to preserve alive the martial spirit which the recent triumphs have awakened ; and to do this in so prominent a way as may attract the attention of the most thoughtless, and force them on the observation of the most inconsiderate. It is from men of this description—from the young, the gay, and the active—that our armies are filled ; and it is on the spirit with which they are animated that the national safety depends. Unless *they* are impressed with the recollection of past achievements, and a sense of the glories of that country which they are to defend, it will little avail us in the moment of danger, that the victories on which every one now dwells with exultation are faithfully recorded in history, and well known to the sedentary and pacific part of our population.

It is upon the preservation of this spirit that the safety of every nation must depend. It is in vain that it may be encircled with fortresses, or defended by mountains, or begirt by the ocean ; its real security is to be found in the spirit and the valour of its people. The army which enters the field in the conviction that it is to conquer, has already half gained the day. The people who recollect with pride the achievements of their forefathers, will not prove unworthy of them in the field of battle. The remembrance of their heroic actions preserved the independence of the Swiss republics amidst the powerful empires by which they were surrounded ; and the glory of her armies, joined to the terror of her name, upheld the Roman empire for centuries after the warlike

spirit of the people had become extinct. It is this which constitutes the strength and multiplies the triumphs of veteran soldiers; and it is this which renders the qualities of military valour and prowess hereditary in a nation.

Every people, accordingly, whose achievements are memorable in past history, have felt the influence of these national recollections, and received them as the most valuable inheritance from their forefathers. The statesmen of Athens, when they wished to rouse that fickle people to any great or heroic action, reminded them of the national glory of their ancestors, and pointed to the Acropolis crowned with the monuments of their valour; and invoked the shades of those who died at Marathon and Plataea, to sanctify the cause in which they were to be engaged. The Swiss peasants, for five hundred years after the establishment of their independence, assembled on the fields of Morgarten and Laupen, and spread garlands over the graves of the fallen warriors, and prayed for the souls of those who had died for their country's freedom. The Romans attached a superstitious reverence to the rock of the Capitol, and loaded its temples with the spoils of the world, and looked back, with a mixture of veneration and pride, to the struggles which it had witnessed and the triumphs which it had won.

“Capitoli immobile Saxum.”

When Scipio Africanus was accused by a faction in the forum, in place of answering the charge, he turned to the Capitol, and invited the people to accompany him to the temple of Jupiter, and return thanks for the defeat of the Carthaginians. Such was the influence of local associations on that severe people; and so natural is it for the human mind to embody its recollections in some external object; and so important an effect are these recollections fitted to have, when they are perpetually brought back to the public mind by the sight of the objects to which they have been attached.

The erection of national monuments, on a scale suited to the greatness of the events they are intended to commemorate, seems better calculated than any other measure to perpetuate the spirit which the events of our times have awakened in this country. It will force itself on the observation of the most thoughtless, and recall the recollection of danger and

glory, during the slumber of peaceful life. Thousands who never would otherwise have cast a thought upon the glory of their country, will by it be awakened to a sense of what befits the descendants of those great men who have died in the cause of national freedom. While it will attest the gratitude of the nation to departed worth, it will serve at the same time to mark the distinction which similar victories may win. Like the Roman Capitol, it will stand at once the monument of former greatness, and the pledge of future glory.

Nor is it to be imagined that a national monument in the capital is sufficient for this purpose, and that the commencement of a similar undertaking in any other quarter is an unnecessary or superfluous proceeding. It is quite proper that in the metropolis of the United Empire the trophies of its common triumphs should be found, and that the national funds should there be devoted to the formation of a monument, worthy of the splendid achievements which her united forces have performed. But the whole benefits of the emulation between the two nations, from which our armies have already derived such signal advantage, would be lost, if Scotland were to participate only in the triumphs of her sister kingdom, without distinctly marking her own peculiar and national pride, in the glory of her own people. The valour of the Scottish regiments is known and celebrated from one end of Europe to the other; and this circumstance, joined to the celebrity of the poems of Ossian, has given a distinction to our soldiers, to which, for so small a body of men, there is no parallel in the history of the present age. Would it not be a subject of reproach to this country, if the only land in which no record of their gallantry is to be found, was the land which gave them birth; and that the traveller who has seen the tartan hailed with enthusiasm on every theatre of Europe, should find it forgotten only in the metropolis of that kingdom which owes its salvation to the bravery by which it has been distinguished?

The animating effects, moreover, which the sight of a national trophy is fitted to have on a martial people, would be entirely lost in this country, if no other monument to Scottish valour existed than the monument in London. There is not a hundredth part of our population who have

ever an opportunity of going to that city ; or to whom the existence even of such a record of their triumph could be known. Even upon those who may see it, the peculiar and salutary effect of a national *Scottish* monument would be entirely lost. It would be regarded as a trophy of *English* glory ; and however much it might animate our descendants to maintain the character of Britain on the field of European warfare, it would leave wholly untouched those feelings of generous emulation by which the rival nations of England and Scotland have hitherto been animated toward each other, and to the existence of which so much of their common triumphs have been owing.

It is in the preservation of this feeling of rivalry that we anticipate the most important effects of the national monument in this metropolis. There is no danger that the ancient animosity of the two nations will ever revive, or that the emulation of our armies will lead them to prove unfaithful to the common cause in which they must hereafter be engaged. The stern feelings of feudal hatred with which the armies of England and Scotland formerly met at Bannockburn or Flodden, have now yielded to the emulation and friendship which form the surest basis of their common prosperity. But it is of the last importance that these feelings of national rivalry should not be extinguished. In every part of the world the good effects of this emulation have been experienced. It is recorded that at the siege of Namur, when the German troops were repulsed from the breach, King William ordered his English guards to advance ; and the veteran warrior was so much affected with the devoted gallantry with which they pressed on to the assault, that, bursting into tears, he exclaimed, " See how my brave English fight ! " At the storm of Bhurtpoor, when one of the British regiments was forced back by the dreadful fire that played on the breach, one of the native regiments was ordered to advance, and these brave men cheered as they passed the British troops, who lay sheltering in the trenches. Everybody knows the distinguished gallantry with which the Scottish regiments, in all the actions of the present war, have sought to maintain their ancient reputation ; and it is not to be forgotten that the first occasion on which the French columns were broken, was when the leading regiments

of England, Scotland, and Ireland, bore down with rival valour on their columns ; and in the enthusiastic cry of the Greys, " Scotland for ever ! " we may perceive the value of those national recollections which it is the object of national monuments to reward and perpetuate. If this spirit shall live in her armies ; if the rival valour which was formerly excited in their fatal wars against each other, shall thus continue to animate them when fighting against their common enemies, and if the remembrance of former division is preserved only to cement the bond of present union, England and Scotland may well, like the Douglas and Percy, both together " be confident against the world in arms."

" Foreign foe or false beguiling
Shall our union ne'er divide,
Hand in hand, while peace is smiling,
And in battle side by side."

There is no fact more certain than that a due appreciation of the grand or the beautiful, in architectural design, is not inherent in any individual or in any people ; and that toward the formation of a correct public taste the existence of *fine models* is absolutely essential. It is this which gives men who have travelled in Italy or Greece so evident a superiority in considering the merits of the works of art in this country over those who have not had similar advantages ; and it is this which renders taste hereditary among a people who have the models of ancient excellence continually before their eyes. The taste of Athens continued to distinguish its people long after they had ceased to be remarkable for any other and more honourable quality ; and Rome itself, in the days of its imperial splendour, was compelled to borrow from a people whom she had vanquished the trophies by which her victories were to be commemorated. To this day the lovers of art flock from the most distant parts of the world to the Acropolis, and dwell with rapture on its unrivalled beauties ; and seek to inhale, amid the ruins that surround them, a portion of the spirit by which they were conceived. The remains of ancient Rome still serve as the model of everything that is great in the designs of modern architects ; and in the Parthenon and the Coliseum we find the originals on which the dome of St Peter's and the piazza St Marco have been formed. It is a

matter of general observation, accordingly, that the inhabitants of Italy possess a degree of taste, alike in sculpture, architecture, and painting, which few persons of the most cultivated understanding in Transalpine countries can acquire. So true it is, that the existence of fine models lays the only foundation of a correct public taste; and that the transference of the model of ancient excellence to this country is the only means of giving to our people the taste by which similar excellence is to be produced.

Now, it has unfortunately happened that the Doric architecture, to which so much of the beauty of Greece and Italy is owing, has been hitherto little understood, and still less put in practice, in this country. We meet with few persons who have not visited the remains of classical antiquity, who can conceive the matchless beauties of the temples of Minerva at Athens, or of Neptune at Pæstum. And, indeed, if our conceptions of the Doric be taken from the few attempts at imitation of it which are here to be met with, they would fall very far short of what the originals are fitted to excite.

In National Monuments, an opportunity is afforded of opening the public mind to a just appreciation of the beauties of this style of architecture, and of presenting it in its most engaging form, and under circumstances peculiarly calculated to excite attention. If the PARTHENON OF ATHENS were transferred to Edinburgh, the public taste would be formed on the finest model which exists in the world, and to the perfection of which the experience of two thousand years has borne testimony. The taste which sprang up round the work of Phidias might then be transferred to our northern regions; and the city whose similarity of site has already procured for it the name of the Modern Athens, might hope to vie with its immortal predecessor in the fine arts. It is impossible to over-estimate the effect of such a structure on the public taste. We are far from underrating the genius of modern architects; it would be ungrateful to insinuate that sufficient ability for the formation of an original design is not to be found. But in the choice of designs for a building which is to stand for centuries, and from which the taste of the nation, in future ages, is in a greater measure to be formed, we conceive that it is

absolutely essential to fix upon some model of known and approved excellence. The erection of a monument in bad taste, or even of doubtful beauty, might destroy the just conceptions on this subject which are beginning to prevail, and throw the national taste a century back at the time when it is making the most rapid advances towards perfection. It is in vain to expect that human genius can ever make anything more beautiful than the Parthenon. It is folly, therefore, to tempt fortune when certainty is in our hands.

There are many reasons besides, which seem in a peculiar manner to recommend the Doric temple for the proposed monument. By the habits of modern times, a different species of architecture has been devoted to the different purposes to which buildings may be applied; and it is difficult to avoid believing that there is something in the separate styles which is peculiarly adapted to the different emotions they are intended to excite. The light tracery, and lofty roof, and airy pillars of the Gothic, seem to accord well with the sublime feelings and spiritual fervour of religion. The massy wall and gloomy character of the castle bespeak the abode of feudal power and the pageantry of barbaric magnificence. The beautiful porticos, and columns, and rich cornices of the Ionic or Corinthian, seem well adapted for the public edifices in a great city; for those which are destined for amusement, or to serve for the purpose of public ornament. The Palladian style is that of all others best adapted for the magnificence of private dwellings, and overwhelms the spectator by a flood of beauty, against which the rules of criticism are unable to stand. If any of these styles of architecture were to be transferred from buildings destined for one purpose to those destined for another, the impropriety of the change would appear very conspicuous. The gorgeous splendour of the Palladian front would be entirely misplaced in an edifice destined for the purpose of religion; and the rich pinnacles and solemn aisles of the Gothic would accord ill with the scene of modern amusement or festivity.

Now, the National Monument is an edifice of a very singular kind, and such as to require a style of architecture peculiar to itself. The Grecian Doric, as it is exhibited in

the Parthenon, appears peculiarly adapted for this purpose. Its form and character is associated in every cultivated mind with the recollections of classical history; and it recalls the brilliant conceptions of national glory, as they were received during the ardent and enthusiastic period of youth; while its stern and massy form befits an edifice destined to commemorate the severe virtues and manly character of war. The original was the National Monument of Athens, intended to commemorate the public gratitude to the Guardian Deity of the Republic, after the glorious termination of the Persian war. Can there be a more appropriate model for the edifice which is to testify our own thankfulness for deliverance from the dangers of the revolutionary war and the overthrow of Napoleon? The effect of such a building, and the influence it would have on the public taste, would be increased to an indefinite degree by the interest of the purpose to which it is destined. An edifice which recalled at once the interest of classical association, and commemorated the splendour of our own achievements, would impress itself in the most indelible manner on the public mind, and force the beauty of its design on the most careless observer. And there can be no doubt that this impression would be far greater, just because it arose from a style of building hitherto unknown in this country, and produced an effect as dissimilar from that of any other architectural design, as the national emotions which it is intended to awaken are from those to which ordinary edifices are destined.

We cannot help considering this as a matter of great importance to this city, and to the taste of the age in which we live. It is no inconsiderable matter to have one building of faultless design erected, and to have the youth of our people accustomed from their infancy to behold the work of Phidias. But the ultimate effect which such a circumstance might produce on the taste of the nation, and the celebrity of this metropolis, is far more important. It is in vain to conceal, that the wealth and the fashion of England is every day attracting the higher part of our society to another capital; and that no provincial city can ever possess attractions of the same description with London, sufficient to enable her to stand an instant in the

struggle. But while London must always eclipse every other city in the empire in all that depends on wealth, power, or fashionable elegance, nature has given to the Scottish metropolis the means of establishing a superiority of a higher and a more permanent kind. The matchless beauty of its situation, the superb cliffs by which it is surrounded, the magnificent prospects of the bay which it commands, have given to Edinburgh the means of becoming the most *beautiful* town that exists in the world. And the inexhaustible quarries of freestone, which lie in the immediate vicinity, have rendered architectural embellishment an easier object in this city than in any other in the empire. It cannot be denied, however, that much still remains to be done in this respect, and that every stranger observes the striking contrast between the beauty of its private houses, and the deplorable scantiness of its public buildings. The establishment of a taste for edifices of an ornamental description, and the gradual purification of the popular taste, which may fairly be expected from the influence of so perfect a model as the Parthenon of Athens, would ultimately, in all probability, render this city the favourite residence of the fine arts; the spot to which strangers would resort, both as the place where the rules of taste are to be studied, and the models of art are to be found. And thus, while London is the Rome of the empire, to which the young, and the ambitious, and the gay, resort for the pursuit of pleasure, of fortune, or of ambition, Edinburgh might become another Athens, in which the arts and the sciences flourished, under the shade of her ancient fame, and established a dominion over the minds of men more permanent than even that which the Roman arms were able to effect.

Should the Parthenon be finally fixed on as the model for the national monument, it seems hardly necessary to hint at the *situation* in which it ought to be placed. It is observed by Clarke, that of all the cities which he had visited during his extensive travels, Edinburgh bears the closest resemblance to the cities of ancient Greece. Its position on a rock, in the middle of a fertile and champagne country; the vicinity of the sea, and the disposition of the town at the base of the fortress, resemble in the most

striking manner the situations of Corinth, Athens, Argos, and most of the Grecian capitals. To make the resemblance complete, he adds, it is only necessary to have a temple of great dimensions placed on the Calton Hill; and such an edifice, seen from all quarters, and forming an object in every landscape, would give a classical air to that beautiful city, of which the value cannot be easily conceived. We are thoroughly persuaded, that the erection of the Parthenon on the Calton Hill would do more to add to the beauty of Edinburgh, than a million laid out in any other situation.

The Greeks always fixed on an eminence for the situation of their temples; and whatever was the practice of a people of such exquisite taste, is well worthy of imitation. The Acropolis of Athens, the Acrocorinthus of Corinth, the temple of Jupiter Panhellenius in Egina, the white columns of that of Minerva on the promontory of Sunium, are instances of the beauty of these edifices when placed on such conspicuous situations. At Athens in particular, the temples of Jupiter Olympius and of Theseus are situated in the plain; but although the former is built in a style of magnificence to which there is no parallel, and is double the size of the Parthenon, its effect is infinitely less striking than that of the temple of Minerva, which crowns the Acropolis, and meets the eye from every part of the adjacent country. The Temple of Jupiter Panhellenius, in the island of Egina, is neither so large nor so beautiful as the Temple of Theseus; but there is no one who ever thought of comparing the effect which the former produces crowning a rich and wooded hill, to that which is felt on viewing the latter standing in the plain of Attica. The Temple of Neptune, at Pæstum, has a sublime effect from the desolation that surrounds it, and from the circumstance of there being no eminence for many miles to interfere with its stern and venerable form; but there is no one who must not have felt that the grandeur of this edifice would be entirely lost if it were placed in a modern city, and overtopped by buildings destined for the most ordinary purposes. The Temple of Vesta, at Tivoli, perched on the crag which overhangs the cataract, is admired by all the world; but the temple to the same goddess, on the banks of the Tiber

at Rome, is passed over without notice, though the intrinsic beauty of the one is nearly as great as that of the other. To come nearer home, the County Rooms, in the High Street of Edinburgh, are built precisely, so far as the columns go, on the model of the Erychtheum at Athens: but no one who has seen these columns only in their present situation, overtopped by the lofty piles by which they are surrounded, could conceive the beauty of the originals, standing on the rock of the Acropolis, and gilded by the rays of an Athenian sun. In the landscapes, too, of Claude and Poussin, who knew so well the situation in which every building appears to most advantage, the ruins of temples are generally placed on prominent fronts, or on the summit of small hills. The practice of the ancient Greeks, in the choice of situations for their temples, joined to that of the modern Italian painters in their ideal representations of the same objects, leaves no room to doubt that the course which they followed was that which the peculiar nature of the building required.

THE CRUSADES

[BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, APRIL 1846]

THE Crusades are, beyond all question, the most extraordinary and memorable movement that ever took place in the history of mankind. Neither ancient nor modern times can furnish anything even approaching to a parallel. They were stimulated neither by the lust of conquest nor the love of gain; they were not the results of northern poverty pressing on southern plenty, nor do they furnish an example of civilised discipline overcoming barbaric valour. The warriors who assumed the Cross were not stimulated, like the followers of Cortes and Pizarro, by the thirst for gold, nor roused, like those of Timour and Genghis Khan, by the passion for conquest. They did not burn, like the legionary soldiers of Rome, with the love of country, nor sigh with Alexander, because another world did not remain to conquer. They did not issue, like the followers of Mahomet, with the sword in one hand and the Koran in the other, to convert by subduing mankind, and win the houris of Paradise by imbruing their hands in the blood of the unbelievers. The ordinary motives which rouse the ambition, or awaken the passions of men, were to them unknown. One only passion warmed every bosom, one only desire was felt in every heart. To rescue the Holy Sepulchre from the hands of the Infidels—to restore the heritage of Christ to his followers—to plant the Cross again on Mount Calvary—was the sole object of their desires. For this they lived, for this they died. For this, millions of warriors abandoned their native seats, and left their bones to whiten the fields

of Asia. For this Europe, during two centuries, was precipitated on Asia. To stimulate this astonishing movement, all the powers of religion, of love, of poetry, of romance, and of eloquence, during a succession of ages, were devoted. Peter the Hermit shook the heart of Europe by his preaching, as the trumpet rouses the war-horse. Poetry and romance aided the generous illusion. No maiden would look at a lover who had not served in Palestine ; few could resist those who had. And so strongly was the European heart then stirred, so profound the emotions excited by those events, that their influence is felt even at this distant period. The highest praise yet awarded to valour is, that it recalls the lion-hearted Richard ; the most envied meed bestowed on beauty, that it rivals the fascination of Armida. No monument is yet approached by the generous and brave with such emotion as those now mouldering in our churches, which represent the warrior lying with his arms crossed on his breast, in token that, during life, he had served in the Holy Wars.

The Crusades form the true heroic age of Europe : the *Jerusalem Delivered* is its epic poem. Then alone its warriors fought and died together. Banded together under a second " King of men," the forces of Christendom combated around the Holy City against the strength of Asia drawn to its defence. The cause was nobler, the end greater, the motives more exalted, than those which animated the warriors of the Iliad. Another Helen had not fired another Troy ; the hope of sharing the spoils of Phrygia had not drawn together the predatory bands of another Greece. The characters on both sides had risen in proportion to the magnitude and sanctity of the strife in which they were engaged. Holier motives, more generous passions were felt, than had yet, from the beginning of time, strung the soldier's arm. Saladin was a mightier prince than Hector ; Godfrey a nobler character than Agamemnon ; Richard immeasurably more heroic than Achilles. The strife did not continue for ten years, but for twenty lustres ; and yet, so uniform were the passions felt through its continuance, so identical the objects contended for, that the whole has the unity of interest of a Greek drama.

All nations bore their part in this mighty tragedy. The

Franks were there, under Godfrey of Bouillon and Raymond of Toulouse, in such strength as to have stamped their name in the East upon Europeans in general ; the English nobly supported the ancient fame of their country under the lion-hearted king ; the Germans followed the Dukes of Austria and Bavaria ; the Flemings those of Hainault and Brabant ; the Italians and Spaniards reappeared on the fields of Roman fame ; even the distant Swedes and Norwegians, the descendants of the Goths and Northmen, sent forth their contingents to combat in the common cause of Christianity. Nor were the forces of Asia assembled in less marvellous proportions. The bands of Persia were there, terrible as when they destroyed the legions of Crassus and Antony, or withstood the invasions of Heraclius and Julian ; the descendants of the followers of Sesostris appeared on the field of ancient and forgotten glory ; the swarthy visages of the Ethiopians were seen ; the distant Tartars hurried to the theatre of carnage and plunder ; the Arabs, flushed with the conquest of the Eastern world, combated with unconquerable resolution for the faith of Mahomet. The arms of Europe were tested against those of Asia, as much as the courage of the descendants of Japhet was with the daring of the children of Ishmael. The long lance, ponderous panoply, and weighty war-horse of the West, was matched against the twisted hauberk, sharp sabre, and incomparable steed of the East ; the sword crossed with the scimitar, the dagger with the poniard ; the armour of Milan was scarce proof against the Damascus blade ; the archers of England tried their strength with the bowmen of Arabia. Nor were exciting passions, animating recollections, and high religious feelings, wanting to sustain the courage on both sides. The Christians asserted the ancient superiority of Europe over Asia ; the Saracens were proud of the recent conquest of the East, Africa, and Southern Europe, by their arms ; the former pointed to a world subdued and long held in subjection ; the latter, to a world newly reft from the infidel, and won by their sabres to the sway of the Crescent. The one deemed themselves secure of salvation while combating for the Cross, and sought an entrance to heaven through the breach of Jerusalem ; the other, strong in the belief of fatalism, advanced fearless to the conflict,

and strove for the houris of Paradise amidst the lances of the Christian host.

When nations so powerful, leaders so renowned, forces so vast, courage so unshaken in the contending parties, were brought into collision, under the influence of passions so strong, enthusiasm so exalted, devotion so profound, it was impossible that innumerable deeds of heroism should not have been performed on both sides. If a poet equal to Homer had arisen in Europe to sing the conflict, the warriors of the Crusades would have been engraven on our minds like the heroes of the Iliad; and all future ages would have resounded with their exploits, as they have with those of Achilles and Agamemnon, of Ajax and Ulysses, of Hector and Diomedes. But though Tasso has, with incomparable beauty, enshrined in immortal verse the feelings of chivalry, and the enthusiasm of the Crusades, he has not left a poem which has taken, or ever can take, the general hold of the minds of men, which the Iliad has done. The reason is, it is not founded in nature; it is the ideal, but it is not the ideal based on the real. Considered as a work of imagination, the *Gerusalemme Liberata* is one of the most exquisite conceptions of human fancy, and will for ever command the admiration of romantic and elevated minds. But it wants that yet higher, or, at least, more popular quality, which arises from a thorough knowledge of human nature—a graphic delineation of actual character, a faithful picture of the real passions and sufferings of mortality. It is the most perfect example of poetic *fancy*; but the highest species of the epic poem is to be found, not in poetic fancy but *poetic history*. The heroes and heroines of the *Jerusalem Delivered* are noble and attractive. It is impossible to study them without admiration; but they resemble real life as little as the Enchanted Forest and spacious battle-fields, which Tasso has described in the environs of Jerusalem, do the arid ridges, waterless ravines, and stone-covered hills in the real scene, which have been painted by the matchless pens of Chateaubriand and Lamartine.

The love of Tancred, the tenderness of Erminia, the heroism of Rinaldo, are indelibly engraven in the recollection of every sensitive reader of Tasso; but no man ever saw such characters, or anything resembling them, in real life.

They are aërial beings, like Miranda in the *Tempest* or Rosalind in the forest ; but they recall no traits of actual existence. The enchantment of Armida, the death of Clorinda, belong to a different class. They rise to the highest flights of the epic muse ; for female fascination is the same in all ages ; and Tasso drew from the life in the first, while his exquisite taste and elevated soul raised him to the highest moral sublimity and pathos which human nature can reach in the second. Considered, however, as the poetic history of the Crusades, as the Iliad of modern times, the *Jerusalem Delivered* will not bear any comparison with its immortal predecessor. It conveys little idea of the real events ; it embodies no traits of nature ; it has enshrined few real traditions of the past. The distant era of the Crusades, separated by three centuries from the time when he wrote, had come down to Tasso blended with the refinements of civilisation, the courtesy of chivalry, the graces of antiquity, the conceits of the troubadours. In one respect only he has faithfully portrayed the feelings of the time when his poem was laid. In the uniform elevation of mind in Godfrey of Bouillon ; his constant forgetfulness of self ; his sublime devotion to the objects of his mission, is to be found a true picture of the spirit of the Crusades, as it appeared in their most dignified champions. And it is fortunate for mankind that the noble portrait has been arrayed in such colours as must render it as immortal as the human race.

If poetry has failed in portraying the real spirit of the Crusades, has history been more successful ? Never was a nobler theme presented to human ambition. We may see what may be made of it, by the inimitable fragment of its annals which Gibbon has left in his narrative of the storming of Constantinople by the Franks and Venetians. Only think what a subject is presented to the soul of genius, guiding the hand, and sustaining the effort of industry ! The rise of the Mahometan power in the East, and the subjugation of Palestine by the arms of the Saracens ; the profound indignation excited in Europe by the narratives of the sufferings of the Christians who had made pilgrimages to the Holy Sepulchre ; the sudden and almost miraculous impulse communicated to multitudes by the

preaching of Peter the Hermit; the universal frenzy which seized all classes, and the general desertion of fields and cities, in the anxiety to share in the holy enterprise of rescuing it from the infidels; the unparalleled sufferings and total destruction of the huge multitude of men, women, and children who formed the vanguard of Europe, and perished in the first Crusade, make up, as it were, the first act of the eventful story. Next comes the firm array of warriors which was led by Godfrey of Bouillon in the second Crusade. Their march through Hungary and Turkey to Constantinople; the description of the Queen of the East, with its formidable ramparts, noble harbours, and crafty government; the battles of Nice and Dorislaus, and marvellous defeats of the Persians by the arms of the Christians; the long duration, and almost fabulous termination of the siege of Antioch, by the miracle of the holy lance; the advance to Jerusalem; the defeat of the Egyptians before its walls, and final storming of the holy city by the resistless prowess of the crusaders, terminate the second act of the mighty drama.

The third commences with the establishment, in a durable manner, of the Latins in Palestine, and the extension of its limits,—by the subjection of Ptolemais, Edessa, and a number of strongholds towards the east. The constitution of the monarchy by the “Assizes of Jerusalem,” the most regular and perfect model of feudal sovereignty that ever was formed; with the singular orders of the knights-templars, and the knights of St John of Jerusalem, which in a manner organised the strength of Europe for its defence, blend the detail of manners, institutions, and military establishments, with the otherwise too frequent narratives of battles and sieges. Next come the vast and almost convulsive efforts of the Orientals to expel the Christians from their shores; the long wars and slow degrees by which the monarchy of Palestine was abridged, and at last its strength broken by the victorious sword of Saladin, and the wood of the true cross lost, in the battle of Tiberias. But this terrible event, which at once restored Jerusalem to the power of the Saracens, again roused the declining spirit of European enterprise. A hero rose up for the defence of the Holy Land. Richard Cœur-

de-Lion and Philip Augustus appeared at the head of the chivalry of England and France. The siege of Ptolemais exceeded in heroic deeds that of Troy; the battle of Ascalon broke the strength and humbled the pride of Saladin; and, but for the jealousy and defection of France, Richard would have again rescued the Holy Sepulchre from the hands of the infidels, and perhaps permanently established a Christian monarchy on the shores of Palestine.

The fourth Crusade, under Dandolo, when the arms of the Faithful were turned aside from the holy enterprise by the spoils of Constantinople, and the blind Doge leapt from his galley on the towers of the imperial city, forms the splendid subject of the fourth act. The marvellous spectacle was there exhibited of a band of adventurers, not mustering above twenty thousand combatants, carrying by storm the mighty Queen of the East, subverting the Byzantine empire, and establishing themselves in a durable manner, in feudal sovereignty, over the whole of Greece and European Turkey. The wonderful powers of Gibbon, the luminous pages of Sismondi, have thrown a flood of light on this extraordinary event, and almost brought its principal events before our eyes. The passage of the Dardanelles by the Christian armament; the fears of the warriors at embarking in the mighty enterprise of attacking the imperial city; the imposing aspect of its palaces, domes, and battlements; the sturdy resistance of the Latin squares to the desultory charges of the Byzantine troops; in fine, the storm of the city itself, and overthrow of the empire of the Cæsars, stand forth in the most brilliant light in the immortal pages of these two writers. But great and romantic as this event was, it was an episode in the history of the Crusades, it was a diversion of its forces, a deviation from its spirit. It is an ordinary, though highly interesting and eventful siege; very different from the consecration of the forces of Europe to the rescuing of the Holy Sepulchre.

Still more calamitous was the result of the last Crusade, under St Louis, which shortly after terminated in the capture of Ptolemais, and the final expulsion of the Christians from the shores of Palestine. Melancholy, however, as are the features of that eventful story, it excites a deeper

emotion than the triumphant storm of Constantinople by the champions of the Cross. St Louis was unfortunate, but he was so in a noble cause; he preserved the purity of his character, the dignity of his mission, equally amidst the arrows of the Egyptians on the banks of the Nile, as on the death-bestridden shores of the Libyan Desert. There is nothing more sublime in history than the death of this truly saint-like prince, amidst his weeping followers. England reappeared with lustre in the last glare of the flames of the crusades, before they sank for ever: the blood of the Plantagenets proved worthy of itself. Prince Edward again erected the banner of victory before the walls of Acre, and his heroic consort, who sucked the poison of the assassin from his wounds, has passed, like Belisarius or Cœur-de-Lion, into the immortal shrine of romance. Awful was the catastrophe in which the tragedy terminated; and the storm of Acre, and slaughter of thirty thousand of the Faithful, while it finally expelled the Christians from the Holy Land, awakened the European powers, when too late, to a sense of the ruinous effect of those divisions which had permitted the vanguard of Christendom, the bulwark of the faith, to languish and perish, after a heroic resistance, on the shores of Asia.

Nor was it long before the disastrous consequences of these divisions appeared, and it was made manifest, even to the most inconsiderate, what dangers had been averted from the shores of Europe, by the contest which had so long fixed the struggle on those of Asia. The dreadful arms of the Mahometans, no longer restrained by the lances of the Crusaders, appeared in menacing, and apparently irresistible strength, on the shores of the Mediterranean. Empire after empire sank beneath their strokes. Constantinople, and with it the empire of the East, yielded to the arms of Mahomet II.; Rhodes, with its spacious ramparts and well-defended bastions, to those of Solyman the Magnificent; Malta, the key to the Mediterranean, was only saved by the almost superhuman valour of its devoted knights; Hungary was overrun; Vienna besieged, and the death of Solyman apparently alone prevented him from realising his threat, of stabling his steed at the high altar of St Peter's. The glorious victory of Lepanto, the raising of the siege of

Vienna by John Sobieski, only preserved, at distant intervals, Christendom from subjugation, and possibly the faith of the Gospel from extinction on the earth. A consideration of these dangers may illustrate of what incalculable service the Crusades were to the cause of true religion and civilisation, by fixing the contest for two centuries in Asia, when it was most to be dreaded in Europe; and permitting the strength of Christendom to grow, during that long period, till, when it was seriously assailed in its own home, it was able to defend itself. It may show us what we owe to the valour of those devoted champions of the Cross, who struggled with the might of Islamism when "it was strongest, and ruled it when it was wildest;" and teach us to look with thankfulness on the dispensations of that overruling Providence, which causes even the most vehement and apparently extravagant passions of the human mind to minister to the final good of humanity.

For a long period the Crusades were regarded by the world, and treated by historians, as the mere ebullition of frenzied fanaticism—as a useless and deplorable effusion of human blood. It may be conceived with what satisfaction these views were received by Voltaire, and the whole sceptical writers of France, and how completely, in consequence, they deluded more than one generation. Robertson was the first who pointed out some of the important consequences which the Crusades had on the structure of society and progress of improvement in modern Europe. Guizot and Sismondi have followed in the same track; and the truths they have unfolded are so evident, that they have received the unanimous concurrence of all thinking persons. Certain it is, that so vast a migration of men, so prodigious a heave of the human race, could not have taken place without producing the most important effects. Few as were the warriors who returned from the Holy Wars, in comparison of those who set out, they brought back with them many of the most important acquisitions in arts and sciences which the East had achieved. The terrace cultivation of Tuscany, the invaluable irrigation of Lombardy, date from the Crusades: it was from the warriors or pilgrims who returned from the Holy Land, that the incomparable silk and velvet manufac-

tures, and delicate jewellery of Venice and Genoa, took their rise. Nor were the consequences less material on those who remained behind, and did not share in the immediate fruits of Oriental enterprise. Immense was the impulse communicated to Europe by the prodigious migration. It dispelled prejudice, by bringing distant improvement before the eyes ; awakened activity, by exhibiting to the senses the effects of foreign enterprise ; it drew forth and expended long-accumulated capital ; the fitting out so vast a host of warriors stimulated labour, as the wars of the French Revolution did those of the European states six centuries afterwards. The feudal aristocracy never recovered the shock given to their power by the destruction of many families, and the overwhelming debts fastened on others, by these costly and protracted contests. Great part of the prosperity, freedom, and happiness which have since prevailed in the principal European monarchies, is to be ascribed to the Crusades. So great an intermingling of the different faiths and races of mankind never takes place without producing lasting and beneficial consequences.

These views have been amply illustrated by the philosophic historians of modern times. But there is another effect of far more importance than them all put together, which has not yet attracted the attention it deserves, because the opposite set of evils are only beginning now to rise into general and formidable activity. This is the fixing the mind, and still more the heart of Europe, for so long a period, on *generous and disinterested objects*. Whoever has attentively considered the constitution of human nature as he feels it in himself, or has observed it in others,—whether as shown in the private society with which he has mingled, or the public concerns of nations he has observed,—will at once admit that SELFISHNESS is its greatest bane. It is at once the source of individual degradation and of public ruin. He knew the human heart well who prescribed as the first of social duties, “to love our neighbour as ourself.” Of what incalculable importance was it, then, to have the mind of Europe, during so many generations, withdrawn from selfish considerations, emancipated from the sway of individual desire, and devoted to objects of generous or spiritual ambition ! The passion of the Crusades may have

been wild, extravagant, irrational, but it was noble, disinterested, and heroic. It was founded on the sacrifice of self to duty ; not on the sacrifice, so common in later times, of duty to self. In the individuals engaged in the Holy Wars, doubtless, there was the usual proportion of human selfishness and passion. Certainly they had not all the self-control of St Anthony, or the self-denial of St Jerome. But this is the case with all great movements. Individual selfishness blends itself with them all : they are distinguished from each other chiefly by their general and moving principle. This was eminently the case during the Crusades. The passion which then moved the general mind was grand and generous. It first severed war from the passion of lust or revenge, and the thirst for plunder on which it had hitherto been founded, and based it on the generous and disinterested object of rescuing the Holy Sepulchre. Courage was sanctified, because it was exerted in a noble cause : even bloodshed became excusable, for it was done to stop the shedding of blood. The noble and heroic feelings which have taken such hold of the mind of modern Europe, and distinguish it from any other age or quarter of the globe, have mainly arisen from the profound emotions awakened by the mingling of the passions of chivalry with the aspirations of devotion during the Crusades. The sacrifice of several millions of men, however dreadful an evil, was a transient and slight calamity, when set against the incalculable effect of communicating such feelings to their descendants, and stamping them for ever upon the race of Japhet, destined to people and subdue the world.

Look at the mottoes on the seals of our older nobility, which date from the era of the Crusades, or the ages succeeding it, when their heroic spirit was not yet extinct, and there will be seen the clearest demonstration of what was the spirit of these memorable contests. They are all founded on the sacrifice of self to duty, of interest to devotion, of life to love. The "Bloody Heart" of the Douglas still attests the time when the heart of Robert Bruce was thrown forward by his heroic follower, the good Lord James, in battle with the Saracens in Spain. There is little to be seen there about industry amassing wealth, or prudence averting calamity ; but much about honour des-

pising danger, and life sacrificed to duty. In a utilitarian or commercial age, such principles may appear extravagant or romantic ; but it is from such extravagant romance that all the greatness of modern Europe has taken its rise. We cannot emancipate ourselves from their influence : a fountain of generous thoughts in every elevated bosom is perpetually gushing forth, from the ideas which have come down to us from the Holy Wars. They live in our romances, in our tragedies, in our poetry, in our language, in our hearts. "Of what use are such feelings?" say the partisans of utility. "Of what use," answers Madame de Staël, "is the Apollo Belvidere, or the poetry of Milton; the paintings of Raphael, or the strains of Handel? Of what use is the rose or the eglantine; the colours of autumn or the setting sun?" And yet what object ever moved the heart as they have done, and ever will do? Of what use is all that is sublime or beautiful in nature, if not to the soul itself? The interest taken in such objects attests the dignity of that being which is immortal and invisible, and which is ever more strongly moved by whatever speaks to its immortal and invisible nature, than by all the cares of present existence.

When such is the magnificence and interest of the subject of the Crusades, it is surprising that no historian has yet appeared in Great Britain who has done justice to the theme. Yet unquestionably none has even approached it. Mill's history is the only one in our language which treats of the subject otherwise than as a branch of general history; and though his work is trustworthy and authentic, it is destitute of the chief qualities requisite for the successful prosecution of so great an undertaking. It is—a rare fault in history—a great deal too short. It is not in two thin octavo volumes that the annals of the conflict of Europe and Asia for two centuries is to be given. It is little more than an abridgment, for the use of young persons, of what the real history should be. It may be true, but it is dull; and dulness is an unpardonable fault in any historian, especially one who had such a subject whereon to exert his powers. The inimitable episode of Gibbon on the storming of Constantinople by the Crusaders is written in a very different style: the truths of history, and the colours of poetry, are there blended in the happiest proportions

There is a fragment affording, *so far as description goes*, a perfect model of what the history of the Crusades should be—what in the hands of genius it will one day become. But it is a model *only* so far as description goes. Gibbon had greater powers as an historian than any modern writer who ever approached the subject ; but he had not the elevated soul requisite for the highest branches of his art, and which was most of all called for in the annalist of the Crusades. He was destitute of enlightened principle ; he was without true philosophy ; he had the eye of painting, and the *powers*, but not the *soul*, of poetry in his mind. He had not moral courage sufficient to withstand the irreligious fanaticism of his age. He was benevolent—but his aspirations never reached the highest interests of mankind ; humane, but “his humanity ever slumbered where women were ravished, or Christians persecuted.”*

Passion and reason in equal proportions, it has been well observed, form energy. With equal truth, and for a similar reason, it may be said, that intellect and imagination in equal proportions form history. It is the want of the last quality which is in general fatal to the persons who adventure on that great but difficult branch of composition. It in every age sends ninety-nine hundreds of historical works down the gulf of time. Industry and accuracy are so evidently and indisputably requisite in the outset of historical composition, that men forget that genius and taste are required for its completion. They see that the edifice must be reared of blocks cut out of the quarry ; and they fix their attention on the quarriers who loosen them from the rock, without considering that the soul of Phidias or Michael Angelo is required to arrange them in the due proportion in the immortal structure. What makes great and durable works of history so rare is, that they alone, perhaps, of any other production, require for their formation a combination of the most opposite qualities of the human mind, qualities which are found united only in a very few individuals in any age. Industry and genius, passion and perseverance, enthusiasm and caution, vehemence and prudence, ardour and self-control, the fire of poetry, the coldness of prose, the eye of painting, the patience of calculation, dramatic

* Porson.

power, philosophic thought, are all called for in the annalist of human events. Mr Fox had a clear perception of what history should be, when he placed it *next to poetry in the fine arts, and before oratory*. Eloquence is but a fragment of what is enfolded in its mighty arms. Military genius ministers only to its more brilliant scenes. Mere ardour, or poetic imagination, will prove wholly insufficient ; they will be deterred at the very threshold of the undertaking by the toil with which it is attended, and turn aside into the more inviting paths of poetry and romance. The labour of writing the "Life of Napoleon" shortened the days of Sir Walter Scott. Industry and intellectual power, if unaided by more attractive qualities, will equally fail of success ; they will produce a respectable work, valuable as a book of reference, which will slumber in forgotten obscurity in our libraries. The combination of the two is requisite to lasting fame, to general and durable success.

MICHAUD is, in many respects, a historian peculiarly qualified for the great undertaking which he has accomplished, of giving a full and accurate, yet graphic history of the Crusades. He belongs to the elevated class in thought ; he is far removed indeed from the utilitarian school of modern days. Deeply imbued with the romantic and chivalrous ideas of the olden time, a devout Catholic as well as a sincere Christian, he brought to the annals of the Crusaders a profound admiration for their heroism, a sincere respect for their disinterestedness, a graphic eye for their delineation, a warm sympathy with their devotion. With the fervour of a warrior, he has narrated the long and eventful story of their victories and defeats ; with the devotion of a pilgrim, visited the scenes of their glories and their sufferings. Not content with giving to the world six large octavos for the narrative of their glory, he has published six other volumes, containing his travels to all the scenes on the shores of the Mediterranean which have been rendered memorable by their exploits. It is hard to say which is most interesting. They mutually reflect and throw light on each other : for in the History we see at every step the graphic eye of the traveller ; in the Travels we meet in every page with the knowledge and associations of the historian.

Michaud, as might be expected from his turn of mind and favourite studies, belongs to the romantic or picturesque school of French historians ; that school of which, with himself, Barante, Michelet, and the two Thierrys, are the great ornaments. He is far from being destitute of philosophical penetration, and many of his articles in that astonishing repertory of learning and ability, the *Biographie Universelle*, demonstrate that he is fully abreast of all the ideas and information of his age. But in his history of the Crusades, he thought, and thought rightly, that the great object was to give a faithful picture of the events and ideas of the time, without any attempt to paraphrase them into the language or thoughts of subsequent ages. The world had had enough of the flippant *persiflage* with which Voltaire had treated the most heroic efforts and tragic disasters of the human race. Philosophic historians had got into discredit from the rash conclusions and unfounded pretensions of the greater part of their number ; though the philosophy of history can never cease to be one of the noblest subjects of human thought. To guard against the error into which they had fallen, the romantic historians recurred with anxious industry to the original and contemporary annals, and discarded everything from their narrative which was not found to be supported by such unquestionable authority. In thought, they endeavoured to reflect, as in a mirror, the ideas of the age of which they treated, rather than to see it through their own : in narrative or description, they rather availed themselves of the materials, how scanty soever, collected by eye-witnesses, in preference to eking out the picture by imaginary additions, and the richer colouring of subsequent ages. This is the great characteristic of the graphic or picturesque school of French history ; and there can be no question that, in regard to the first requisite of history, trustworthiness, and the subordinate, but also highly important object, of rendering the narrative interesting, it is a very great improvement, alike upon the tedious narrative of former learning, and the provoking pretensions of more recent philosophy. Justice can never be done to the actions or thoughts of former times, unless the former are narrated from the accounts of eye-witnesses, and with the fervour which they alone can feel—the latter in the very words, as

much as possible, employed by the speakers on the occasions. Nor will imagination ever produce anything so interesting as the features which actually presented themselves at the moment to the observer. Every painter knows the superior value of sketches, however slight, made on the spot, to the most laboured subsequent reminiscences.

But while this is perfectly true on the one hand, it is equally clear on the other, that this recurrence to ancient and contemporary authority must be for the facts, events, and outline of the story only ; and that the filling up must be done by the hand of the artist who is engaged in producing the complete work. If this is not done, history ceases to be one of the fine arts. It degenerates into a mere collection of chronicles, records, and ballads, without any connecting link to unite, or any regulating mind to arrange them. History then loses the place assigned it by Mr Fox, next to poetry and before oratory ; it becomes nothing more than a magazine of antiquarian lore. Such a magazine may be interesting to antiquaries ; it may be valuable to the learned in ecclesiastical disputes, or the curious in genealogy or family records ; but these interests are of a very partial and transient description. It will never generally fascinate the human race. Nothing ever has, or ever can do so, but such annals as—independent of local or family interest, or antiquarian curiosity—are permanently attractive by the grandeur and interest of the events they recount, and the elegance or pathos of the language in which they are delivered. Such are the histories of Herodotus and Thucydides, the annals of Sallust and Tacitus, the narratives of Homer, Livy, and Gibbon. If, instead of aiming at producing one uniform work of this description, flowing from the same pen, couched in the same style, reflecting the same mind, the historian presents his readers with a collection of quotations from chronicles, state papers, or *jejune* annalists, he has entirely lost sight of the principles of his art. He has not made a picture, but merely put together a collection of original sketches ; he has not built a temple, but only piled together the unfinished blocks of which it was to be composed.

This is the great fault into which Barante, Sismondi, and Michelet have fallen. In their anxiety to be faithful,

they have sometimes become tedious ; in their desire to recount nothing that was not true, they have narrated much that was neither material nor interesting. Barante, in particular, has utterly ruined his otherwise highly interesting history of the Dukes of Burgundy by this error. We have bulls of the Popes, marriage-contracts, feudal charters, treaties of alliance, and other similar instruments, quoted *ad longum* in the text of the history, till no one but an enthusiastic antiquary, or half-cracked genealogist, can go on with the work. The same mistake is painfully conspicuous in Sismondi's *Histoire des Français*, and it is equally conspicuous in Tytler's able *History of Scotland*. Fifteen, at the least, out of the former's valuable thirty volumes, are taken up with quotations from public records or instruments. It is impossible to conceive a greater mistake, in a composition which is intended, not merely for learned men or antiquaries, but for the great body of ordinary readers. The authors of these works are so immersed in their own ideas and researches—they are so enamoured of their favourite antiquities, that they forget that the world in general is far from sharing their enthusiasm, and that many things which to them are of the highest possible interest and importance, seem to the great bulk of readers immaterial or tedious. The two Thierrys have, in a great measure, avoided this fatal error ; for though their narratives are as much based on original and contemporary authorities as any histories can be, the quotations are usually given in an abbreviated form in the notes, and the text is, in general, an unbroken narrative, in their own perspicuous and graphic language. Thence, in a great measure, the popularity and interest of their works. Michaud indulges more in lengthened quotations in his text from the old chronicles, or their mere paraphrases into his own language ; their frequency is the great defect of his valuable history. But the variety and interest of the subjects render this mosaic species of composition more excusable, and less repugnant to good taste, in the account of the Crusades, than it would be, perhaps, in the annals of any other human transactions.

As a specimen of our author's powers and style of description, we subjoin a translation of the animated narrative he gives from the old historians of the famous battle of Doris-

laus, which first subjected the coasts of Asia Minor to the arms of the Crusaders.

“Late on the evening of the 31st of June 1097, the troops arrived at a spot where pasturage appeared abundant, and they resolved to pitch their camp. The Christian army passed the night in the most profound security; but on the following morning, at break of day, detached horsemen presented themselves, and clouds of dust appearing on the adjoining heights, announced the presence of the enemy. Instantly the trumpets sounded, and the whole camp stood to their arms. Bohemond, the second in command, having the chief direction in the absence of Godfrey, hastened to make the necessary dispositions to repel the threatened attack. The camp of the Christians was defended on one side by a river, and on the other by a marsh entangled with reeds and bushes. The Prince of Tarentum caused it to be surrounded with palisades, made with the stakes which served for fixing the cords of the tents; he then assigned their proper posts to the infantry, and placed the women, children, and sick, in the centre. The cavalry, arranged in three columns, advanced to the margin of the river, and prepared to dispute the passage. One of these corps was commanded by Tancred, and William his brother; the other, by the Duke of Normandy and the Count of Chartres. Bohemond, who headed the reserve, was posted with his horsemen on an eminence in the rear, from whence he could descry the whole field of battle.

“Hardly were these dispositions completed, when the Saracens, with loud cries, descended from the mountains, and, as soon as they arrived within bowshot, let fall a shower of arrows upon the Christians. This discharge did little injury to the knights, defended, as they were, by their armour and shields; but a great number of horses were wounded, and, in their pain, introduced disorder into the ranks. The archers, the slingers, the crossbow-men, scattered along the flanks of the Christian army, in vain returned the discharge with their stones and javelins; their missiles could not reach the enemy, and fell on the ground without doing any mischief. The Christian horse, impatient at being inactive spectators of the combat, charged across the river, and fell headlong with their lances in rest on the Saracens; but they avoided the shock, and, opening their ranks, dispersed when the formidable mass approached them. Again rallying at a distance in small bodies, they let fly a cloud of arrows at their ponderous assailants, whose heavy horses, oppressed with weighty armour, could not overtake the swift steeds of the desert.

“This mode of combating turned entirely to the advantage of the Turks. The whole dispositions made by the Christians before the battle became useless. Every chief, almost every cavalier, fought for himself; he took counsel from his own ardour, and it alone. The Christians combated almost singly on a ground with which they were unacquainted; in that terrible strife, death became the only reward of undisciplined valour. Robert of Paris, the same who had sat on the imperial throne beside Alexis, was mortally wounded, after having seen forty of his bravest companions fall by his side. William, brother of Tancred, fell pierced by arrows. Tancred himself, whose lance was broken, and who had no other weapon but his sword, owed his life to Bohemond, who came up to the rescue, and extricated him from the hands of the Infidels.

“While victory was still uncertain between force and address, agility and valour, fresh troops of the Saracens descended from the mountains, and mingled in overwhelming proportion in the conflict. The Sultan of Nice took advantage of the moment when the cavalry of the Crusaders withstood with difficulty the attack of the Turks, and directed his forces against their camp. He assembled the élite of his troops, crossed the river, and overcame

with ease all the obstacles which opposed his progress. In an instant the camp of the Christians was invaded and filled with a multitude of barbarians. The Turks massacred, without distinction, all who presented themselves to their blows, except the women whom youth and beauty rendered fit for their seraglios. If we may credit Albert d'Aix, the wives and daughters of the knights preferred in that extremity slavery to death; for they were seen in the midst of the tumult to adorn themselves with their most elegant dresses, and, arrayed in this manner, sought by the display of their charms to soften the hearts of their merciless enemies.

"Bohemond, however, soon arrived to the succour of the camp, and obliged the Sultan to retrace his steps to his own army. Then the combat recommenced on the banks of the river with more fury than ever. The Duke Robert of Normandy, who had remained with some of his knights on the field of battle, snatched from his standard-bearer his pennon of white, bordered with gold, and exclaiming, '*A moi, la Normandie!*' penetrated the ranks of the enemy, striking down with his sword whatever opposed him, till he laid dead at his feet one of the principal emirs. Tancred, Richard, the Prince of Salerno, Stephen count of Blois, and other chiefs, followed his example, and emulated his valour. Bohemond, returning from the camp, which he had delivered from his oppressors, encountered a troop of fugitives. Instantly advancing among them, he exclaimed, 'Whither fly you, O Christian soldiers?—Do you not see that the enemies' horses, swifter than your own, will not fail soon to reach you? Follow me—I will show you a surer mode of safety than flight.' With these words he threw himself, followed by his own men and the rallied fugitives, into the centre of the Saracens, and striking down all who attempted to resist them, made a frightful carnage. In the midst of the tumult, the women who had been taken and delivered from the hands of the Mussulmans, burning to avenge their outraged modesty, went through the ranks carrying refreshments to the soldiers, and exhorting them to redouble their efforts to save them from Turkish servitude.

"But all these efforts were in vain. The Crusaders, worn out by fatigue, parched by thirst, were unable to withstand an enemy who was incessantly recruited by fresh troops. The Christian army, a moment victorious, was enveloped on all sides, and obliged to yield to numbers. They retired, or rather fled, towards the camp, which the Turks were on the point of entering with them. No words can paint the consternation of the Christians, the disorder of their ranks, or the scenes of horror which the interior of the camp presented. There were to be seen priests in tears, imploring on their knees the assistance of Heaven—there, women in despair rent the air with their shrieks, while the more courageous of their numbers bore the wounded knights into the tents; and the soldiers, despairing of life, cast themselves on their knees before their priests or bishops, and demanded absolution of their sins. In the frightful tumult, the voice of the chief was no longer heard; the most intrepid had already fallen covered with wounds, or sunk under the rays of a vertical sun and the horrors of an agonising thirst. All seemed lost, and nothing to appearance could restore their courage, when all of a sudden loud cries of joy announced the approach of Raymond of Toulouse and Godfrey of Bouillon, who advanced at the head of the second corps of the Christian army.

"From the commencement of the battle, Bohemond had despatched accounts to them of the attack of the Turks. No sooner did the intelligence arrive, than the Duke of Lorraine, the Count of Vermandois, and the Count of Flanders, at the head of their corps-d'armée, directed their march towards the valley of Gorgoni, followed by Raymond and d'Adhemar, who brought up the luggage and formed the rearguard. When they appeared on the eastern slope of the mountains, the sun was high in the heavens, and his rays were reflected from their bucklers, helmets, and drawn swords; their

standards were displayed, and a loud flourish of their trumpets resounded from afar. Fifty thousand horsemen, clad in steel and ready for the fight, advanced in regular order to the attack. That sight at once reanimated the Crusaders and spread terror among the Infidels.

“Already Godfrey, outstripping the speed of his followers, had come up at the head of fifty chosen cavaliers, and taken a part in the combat. Upon this the Sultan sounded a retreat, and took post upon the hills, where he trusted the Crusaders would not venture to attack him. Soon, however, the second corps of the Christians arrived on the field still reeking with the blood of their brethren. They knew their comrades and companions stretched in the dust—they became impatient to avenge them, and demanded with loud cries to be led on to the attack; those even who had combated all day with the first corps desired to renew the conflict. Forthwith the Christian army was arranged for a second battle. Bohemond, Tancred, Robert of Normandy, placed themselves on the left; Godfrey, the Count of Flanders, the Count of Blois, led the right: Raymond commanded in the centre; the reserve was placed under the order of d’Adhemar. Before the chiefs gave the order to advance, the priests went through the ranks, exhorted the soldiers to fight bravely, and gave them their benediction. Then the soldiers and chiefs drew their swords together, and repeated aloud the war-cry of the Crusades, ‘Dieu le veut! Dieu le veut!’ That cry was re-echoed from the mountains and valleys. While the echoes still rolled, the Christian army advanced, and marched full of confidence against the Turks, who, not less determined, awaited them on the summit of their rocky asylum.

“The Saracens remained motionless on the top of the hills; they did not even discharge their redoubtable arrows; their quivers seemed to be exhausted. The broken nature of the ground they occupied precluded the adoption of those rapid evolutions, which in the preceding conflict had proved so fatal to the Christians. They seemed to be no longer animated with the same spirit; they awaited the attack rather with the resignation of martyrs than the hope of warriors. The Count of Toulouse, who assailed them in front, broke their ranks by the first shock. Tancred, Godfrey, and the two Roberts attacked their flanks with equal advantage. D’Adhemar, who with the reserve had made the circuit of the mountains, charged their rear, when already shaken by the attack in front, and on both flanks. This completed their rout. The Saracens found themselves surrounded by a forest of lances, from which there was no escape but in breaking their ranks and seeking refuge among the rocks. A great number of emirs, above three thousand officers, and twenty thousand soldiers fell in the action or pursuit. Four thousand of the Crusaders had perished, almost all in the first action. The enemy’s camp, distant two leagues from the field of battle, fell into the hands of the Crusaders, with vast stores of provisions, tents magnificently ornamented, immense treasures, and a vast number of camels. The sight of these animals, which they had not yet seen in the East, gave them as much surprise as pleasure. The dismounted horsemen mounted the swift steeds of the Saracens to pursue the broken remains of the enemy. Towards evening they returned to the camp loaded with booty, and preceded by their priests singing triumphant songs and hymns of victory. On the following day the Christians interred their dead, shedding tears of sorrow. The priests read prayers over them, and numbered them among the saints in heaven.”—*Hist. des Croisades*, i. 228–233.

This extract gives an idea at once of the formidable nature of the contest which awaited the Christians in their attempts to recover the Holy Land, of the peculiar character of the attack and defence on both sides, and of the talent

for graphic and lucid description which M. Michaud possesses. It is curious how identically the same the attack of the West and defence of the East are in all ages. The description of the manner in which the Crusading warriors were here drawn into a pursuit of, and then enveloped by, the Asiatic light horse, is precisely the same as that in which the legions of Crassus were destroyed ; and might pass for a narrative of the way in which Napoleon's European cavalry were cut to pieces by the Arab horse at the combat at Salahout, near the Red Sea ; or Lord Lake's horse worsted in the first part of the battle of Laswaree in India, before the infantry came up, and, by storming the batteries, restored the combat. On the other hand, the final overthrow of the Saracens at Dorislaus was evidently owing to their imprudence in *standing firm*, and awaiting in that position the attack of the Christians. They did so, trusting to the strength of the rocky ridge on which they were posted ; but that advantage, great as it was, by no means rendered them a match in close fight for the weighty arms and the determined resolution of the Europeans, any more than the discharges of their powerful batteries availed the Mahrattas in the latter part of the battles of Assaye and Laswaree, or, more recently, the Sikhs in the desperate conflict at Ferozeshah on the Sutlej. The discovery of firearms, and all the subsequent improvements in tactics and strategy, though they have altered the weapons with which war is carried on, yet have not materially changed the mode in which success is won, or disaster averted, between ancient and modern times.

Our author's account of the storming of Jerusalem, the final object and crowning glory of the Crusades, is animated and interesting in the highest degree.

“ At the last words of the Hermit Peter, the warmest transports seized the Crusaders. They descended from the Mount of Olives, where they had listened to his exhortations ; and turning to the south, saluted on their right the fountain of Siloë, where Christ had restored sight to the blind ; in the distance they perceived the ruins of the palace of Judah, and advanced on the slope of Mount Sion, which awakened afresh all their holy enthusiasm. Many in that cross march were struck down by the arrows and missiles from the walls : they died blessing God, and imploring His justice against the enemies of the faith. Towards evening the Christian army returned to its quarters, chanting the words of the Prophet—‘ Those of the West shall fear the Lord, and those of the East shall see His glory.’ Having re-entered into the camp, the greater part of the pilgrims passed the night in prayer :

the chiefs and soldiers confessed their sins at the feet of their priests, and received in communion that God whose promises filled them with confidence and hope.

“While the Christian army prepared, by these holy ceremonies, for the combat, a mournful silence prevailed around the walls of Jerusalem. The only sound heard was that of the men who, from the top of the mosques of the city, numbered the hours by calling the Mussulmans to prayers. At the well-known signals, the infidels ran in crowds to their temples to implore the protection of their Prophet: they swore by the mysterious House of Jacob to defend the town, which they styled ‘the House of God.’ The besiegers and besieged were animated with equal ardour for the fight, and equal determination to shed their blood—the one to carry the town, the other to defend it. The hatred which animated them was so violent, that during the whole course of the siege no Mussulman deputy came to the camp of the besiegers, and the Christians did not even deign to summon the town. Between such enemies, the shock could not be other than terrible, and the victors implacable.

“On Thursday, 14th July 1199, at daybreak, the trumpets resounded, and the whole Christian army stood to their arms. All the machines were worked at once: the mangonels and engines poured on the ramparts a shower of stones, while the battering-rams were brought up close to their feet. The archers and slingers directed their missiles with fatal effect against the troops who manned the walls, while the most intrepid of the assailants planted scaling-ladders on the places where the ascent appeared most practicable. On the south, east, and north of the town, rolling towers advanced towards the ramparts, in the midst of a violent tumult, and amidst the cries of the workmen and soldiers. Godfrey appeared on the highest platform of his wooden tower, accompanied by his brother Eustache and Baudoin du Bourg. His example animated his followers: so unerring was their aim, that all the javelins discharged from this platform carried death among the besieged. Tancred, the Duke of Normandy, and the Count of Flanders, combated at the head of their followers: the knights and men-at-arms, animated with the same ardour, pressed into the *mêlée*, and threw themselves into the thickest of the fight.

“Nothing could equal the fury of the first shock of the Christians; but they met everywhere the most determined resistance. Arrows and javelins, boiling oil and water, with Greek fire, were poured down incessantly on the assailants; while fourteen huge machines, which the besieged had got time to oppose to those of the besiegers, replied with effect to the fire of the more distant warlike instruments. Issuing forth by one of the breaches in the rampart, the Infidels made a sortie, and succeeded in burning some of the machines of the Christians, and spread disorder through their army. Towards the end of the day, the towers of Godfrey and Tancred were so shattered that they could no longer be moved, while that of Raymond was falling into ruins. The combat had lasted eleven hours, without victory having declared for the Crusaders. The Christians retired to their camp, burning with rage and grief: their chiefs, and especially the two Roberts, sought in vain to console them, by saying that ‘God had not judged them as yet worthy to enter into His Holy City, and adore the tomb of His Son.’

“The night was passed on both sides in the utmost disquietude: every one deplored the losses already discovered, and dreaded to hear of fresh ones. The Saracens were in hourly apprehension of a surprise: the Christians feared that the Infidels would burn their machines, which they had pushed forward to the foot of the rampart. The besieged were occupied without intermission in repairing the breaches in their walls; the besiegers in putting their machines in a condition to serve for a new assault. On the day following, the same combats and dangers were renewed as on the preceding one. The chiefs sought by their harangues to revive the spirits of

the Crusaders. The priests and bishops went through their tents promising them the assistance of Heaven. On the signal to advance being given, the Christian army, full of confidence, advanced in silence towards the destined points of attack, while the clergy, chanting hymns and prayers, marched round the town.

“The first shock was terrible. The Christians, indignant at the resistance they had experienced on the preceding day, combated with fury. The besieged, who had learned the near approach of the Egyptian army, were animated by the hopes of approaching succour. A formidable array of war-like engines lined the tops of their ramparts. On every side was heard the hissing of javelins and arrows: frequently immense stones, discharged from the opposite sides, met in the air, and fell back on the assailants with a frightful crash. From the top of their towers, the Mussulmans never ceased to throw burning torches and pots of Greek fire on the storming parties. In the midst of this general conflagration, the moving towers of the Christians approached the walls. The chief efforts of the besieged were directed against Godfrey, on whose breast a resplendent cross of gold shone, the sight of which was an additional stimulus to their rage. The Duke of Lorraine saw one of his squires and several of his followers fall by his side; but, though exposed himself to all the missiles of the enemy, he continued to combat in the midst of the dead and the dying, and never ceased to exhort his companions to redouble their courage and ardour. The Count of Toulouse directed the attack on the southern side, and stoutly opposed his machines to those of the Mussulmans: he had to combat the Emir of Jerusalem, who bravely animated his followers by his discourse, and showed himself on the ramparts surrounded by the *élite* of the Egyptian soldiers. On the northern side, Tancred and the two Roberts appeared at the head of their battalions. Firmly stationed on their moving tower, they burned with desire to come to the close combat of the lance and sword. Already their battering-rams had on many points shaken the walls, behind which the Saracens were assembled in dense battalions, as a last rampart against the attack of the Crusaders.

“Mid-day arrived, and the Crusaders had as yet no hope of penetrating into the place. All their machines were in flames: they stood grievously in want of water, and still more of vinegar, which could alone extinguish the Greek fire used by the besieged. In vain the bravest exposed themselves to the most imminent danger, to prevent the destruction of their wooden towers and battering-rams; they fell crushed beneath their ruins, and the devouring flames enveloped their arms and clothing. Many of the bravest warriors had found death at the foot of the ramparts: most of those who had mounted on the rolling towers were *hors de combat*; the remainder, covered with sweat and dust, overwhelmed with heat and the weight of their armour, began to falter. The Saracens who perceived this raised cries of joy. In their blasphemies they reproached the Christians for adoring a God who was unable to defend them. The assailants deplored their loss, and, believing themselves abandoned by Jesus Christ, remained motionless on the field of battle.

“But the aspect of affairs was soon changed. All of a sudden the Crusaders saw, on the Mount of Olives, a horseman shaking a buckler, and giving this signal to enter the town. Godfrey and Raymond, who saw the apparition at the same instant, cried aloud, that St George was come to combat at the head of the Christians. Such was the tumult produced by this incident, that it bore down alike fear and reflection. All rushed tumultuously forward to the assault. The women even, with the children and sick, issued from their retreats, and pressed forward into the throng, bearing water, provisions, or arms, and aiding to drag forward the moving towers. Impelled in this manner, that of Godfrey advanced in the midst of a terrible discharge of stones, arrows, javelins, and Greek fire, and succeeded in getting

so near as to let its drawbridge fall on the ramparts. At the same time a storm of burning darts flew against the machines of the besieged, and the bundles of straw piled up against the last walls of the town took fire. Terrified by the flames, the Saracens gave way. Lethalde and Engelbert de Tournay, followed by Godfrey and his brother Everard, crossed the drawbridge and gained the rampart. Soon with the aid of their followers they cleared it, and, descending into the streets, struck down all who disputed the passage.

"At the same time, Tancred and the two Roberts made new efforts, and on their side, too, succeeded in penetrating into the town. The Mussulmans fled on all sides; the war-cry of the Crusaders, "Dieu le veut! Dieu le veut!" resounded in the streets of Jerusalem. The companions of Godfrey and Tancred with their hatchets cut down the gate of St Stephen, and let in the main body of the Crusaders, who with loud shouts rushed tumultuously in. Some resistance was attempted by a body of brave Saracens in the mosque of Omar; but Everard of Puysaye expelled them from it. All opposition then ceased; but not so the carnage. Irritated by the long resistance of the Saracens, stung by their blasphemies and reproaches, the Crusaders filled with blood that Jerusalem which they had just delivered, and which they regarded as their future country. The carnage was universal. The Saracens were massacred in the streets, in the houses, in the mosques."

The number of the slain greatly exceeded that of the conquerors. In the mosque of Omar alone ten thousand were put to the sword.

"So terrible was the slaughter, that the blood came up to the knees and reins of the horses; and human bodies, with hands and arms severed from the corpse to which they belonged, floated about in the crimson sea.

"In the midst of these frightful scenes, which have for ever stained the glory of the conquerors, the Christians of the Holy City crowded round Peter the Hermit, who five years before had promised to arm the West for the deliverance of the faithful in Jerusalem, and then enjoyed the spectacle of their liberation. They were never wearied of gazing on the man by whom God had wrought such prodigies. At the sight of their brethren whom they had delivered, the pilgrims recollected that they had come to adore the tomb of Jesus Christ. Godfrey, who had abstained from carnage after the victory, quitted his companions, and, attended only by three followers, repaired bareheaded and with naked feet to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Soon the news of that act of devotion spread among the Christian army. Instantly the fury of the war ceased, and the thirst for vengeance was appeased; the Crusaders threw off their bloody garments, and marching together to the Holy Sepulchre, with the clergy at their head, bareheaded and without shoes, they made Jerusalem resound with their groans and sobs. Silence more terrible even than the tumult which had preceded it, reigned in the public places and on the ramparts. No sound was heard but the canticles of repentance, and the words of Isaiah, 'Ye who love Jerusalem, rejoice with me.' So sincere and fervent was the devotion which the Crusaders manifested on this occasion, that it seemed as if the stern warriors, who had just taken a city by assault, and committed the most frightful slaughter, were cenobites who had newly emerged from a long retreat and peaceful meditations."—*Hist. des Croisades*, i. 440–446.

Inexplicable as such contradictory conduct appears to those who "sit at home at ease," and are involved in none of the terrible calamities which draw forth the latent marvels

of the human heart, history in every age affords too many examples of its occurrence to permit us to doubt the truth of the narrative. It is well known that during the worst period of the French Revolution, in the massacres in the prisons on September 2, 1792, some of the mob who had literally wearied their arms in hewing down the prisoners let loose from the jails, took a momentary fit of compunction, were seized with pity for some of the victims, and, after saving them from their murderers, accompanied them home, and witnessed with tears of joy the meeting between them and their relations. We are not warranted, after such facts have been recorded on authentic evidence in all ages, in asserting that this transient humanity is assumed or hypocritical. The conclusion rather is, that the human mind is so strangely compounded of good and bad principles, and contains so many veins of thought apparently irreconcilable with each other, that scarcely anything can be set down as absolutely impossible, but every alleged fact is to be judged of mainly by the testimony by which it is supported, and its coincidence with what has elsewhere been observed of that strange compound of contradictions, the human heart.*

In the events which have been mentioned, the Crusaders were victorious ; and the Crescent, in the outset of the contest, waned before the Cross. But it was only for a time that it did so. The situation of Palestine in Asia, constituting it the advanced post, as it were, of Christendom across the sea, in the regions of Islamism, perpetually exposed it to the attack of the Eastern powers. They were at home, and fought on their own ground, and with their own weapons, in the long contest which followed the first conquest of Palestine ; whereas the forces of the Christians required to be transported, at a frightful expense of life, over a hazardous journey of fifteen hundred miles in length, or conveyed by sea at a very heavy cost from Marseilles, Genoa, or Venice. Irresistible in the first onset, the armament of the Christians gradually dwindled away as the first fervour of the Holy Wars subsided, and the interminable nature of the conflict

* "On the second day of the battle of the barricades in Paris on 24th June 1848, such was the slaughter of the troops which advanced to the attack of those formidable intrenchments, that not only did the gutters everywhere run red with human blood, but in some of the narrow streets the gory stream was so deep, that, as in Jerusalem, it floated human bodies."—*Times*, 27th June 1848.

in which they were engaged with the Oriental powers became apparent. It was the same thing as Spain maintaining a Transatlantic contest with her South American, or England with her North American colonies. Indeed, the surprising thing, when we consider the exposed situation of the kingdom of Palestine, the smallness of its resources, and the scanty and precarious support it received, after the first burst of the Crusades was over, from the Western powers, is not that it was at last destroyed, but that it existed so long as it did. The prolongation of its life was mainly owing to the extraordinary qualities of one man.

It is hard to say whether the heroism of Richard Cœur-de-Lion has been most celebrated in Europe or Asia. Like Solomon, Alexander the Great, Haroun-el-Raschid, Charlemagne, and Napoleon, his fame has taken root as deeply in the East as in the West, among his enemies as his friends; among the followers of Mahomet as the disciples of the Cross. If he is the hero of European romance,—if he is the theme of the Troubadour's song, he is not less celebrated among the descendants of the Saracens; his exploits are not less eagerly chanted in the tents of the children of Ishmael. To this day, when an Arab's steed starts at a bush in the desert, his master asks him if he expects to see Richard issue from the covert. He possessed that surprising personal strength and daring valour which are so highly prized by warriors in all rude periods, and united with those qualities that singleness of heart and *bonhomie* of disposition, which, not less powerfully in the great, win upon the hearts of men. His chief qualities—those which have given him his deathless fame—undoubtedly were his heroic courage, extraordinary personal strength, and magnanimity of mind. But if his campaigns with Saladin are attentively considered, it will appear that he was also a great general; and that his marvellous successes were as much owing to his conduct as a commander as his prowess as a knight. This is more particularly conspicuous, in the manner in which he conducted his then sorely diminished army from Acre to within sight of Jerusalem, surrounded as it was the whole way by prodigious clouds of Asiatic horse, headed by the redoubtable Saladin. Beyond all doubt he would, but for the defection of Philip Augustus

and France, have wrested Palestine from the Infidels, and again planted the Cross on Mount Calvary, despite the whole forces of the East, led by their ablest and most powerful sultans. His grief at not being able to accomplish this glorious object is well described by Michaud :—

“After a month’s abode at Bethnopolis, seven leagues from Jerusalem, the Crusaders renewed their complaints, and exclaimed with sadness, ‘We shall never go to Jerusalem!’ Richard, with a heart torn by contending feelings, while he disregarded the clamours of the pilgrims, shared their grief, and was indignant at his own fortune. One day that his ardour in pursuing the Saracens had led him to the heights of Emmaus from which he beheld the towers of Jerusalem, he burst into tears at the sight, and, covering his face with his buckler, declared he was unworthy to contemplate the Holy City which his arms could not deliver.”—*Hist. des Croisades*, ii. 399.

As a specimen of the magnitude of the battles fought in this Crusade, we take that of Assur, near Ptolemais, in which Richard Cœur-de-Lion commanded the Christian force :—

“Two hundred thousand Mussulmans were drawn up in the plains of Assur, ready to bar the passage of the Christian army, and deliver a decisive battle. No sooner did he perceive the Saracen array, than Richard divided his army into five corps. The Templars formed the first; the warriors of Brittany and Anjou the second; the king, Guy, and the men of Poitou, the third; the English and Normans, grouped round the royal standard, the fourth; the Hospitallers, the fifth; and behind them marched the archers and javelin men. At three o’clock in the afternoon, the army was all arranged in order of battle, when all at once a multitude of Saracens appeared in rear, who descended from the mountains which the Crusaders had just crossed. Amongst them were Bedouin Arabs, bearing bows and round bucklers; Scythians with long bows, and mounted on tall and powerful horses; Ethiopians of a lofty stature, with their sable visages strangely streaked with white. These troops of barbarians advanced on all sides against the Christian army with the rapidity of lightning. The earth trembled under their horses’ feet. The din of their clarions, cymbals, and trumpets, was so prodigious, that the loudest thunder could not have been heard. Men were in their ranks, whose sole business it was to raise frightful cries, and excite the courage of the Mussulman warriors by chanting their national songs. Thus stimulated, their battalions precipitated themselves upon the Crusaders, who were speedily assailed at once in front, both flanks, and rear—enveloped by enemies, say the old chronicles, as the eyelashes surround the eye. After their arrows and javelins were discharged, the Saracens commenced the attack with the lance, the mace, and the sword. An English chronicle aptly compares them to smiths, and the Crusaders to the anvil on which their hammers rang. Meanwhile, the Franks did not for a moment intermit their march towards Assur, and the Saracens, who sought in vain to shake their steady ranks, called them ‘a nation of iron.’

“Richard had renewed his orders for the whole army to remain on the defensive, and not to advance against the enemy till six trumpets sounded—two at the head of the army, two in the centre, two in the rear. This signal was impatiently expected; the barons and knights could bear everything except the disgrace of remaining thus inactive in presence of an enemy, who without intermission renewed his attacks. Those of the rearguard had already begun to reproach Richard with having forgotten them; they invoked

in despair the protection of St George, the patron of the brave. At last some of the bravest and most ardent, forgetting the orders they had received, precipitated themselves on the Saracens. This example soon drew the Hospitallers after them; the contagion spread from rank to rank, and soon the whole Christian army was at blows with the enemy, and the scene of carnage extended from the sea to the mountains. Richard showed himself wherever the Christians had need of his succour; his presence was always followed by the flight of the Turks. So confused was the mêlée, so thick the dust, so vehement the fight, that many of the Crusaders fell by the blows of their comrades, who mistook them for enemies. Torn standards, shivered lances, broken swords, strewed the plain. Such of the combatants as had lost their arms, hid themselves in the bushes, or ascended trees; some, overcome with terror, fled towards the sea, and from the top of the rocks precipitated themselves into its waves.

“Every instant the combat became warmer and more bloody. The whole Christian army was now engaged in the battle, and, returning on its steps, the chariot which bore the royal standard was in the thickest of the fight. Ere long, however, the Saracens were unable to sustain the impetuous assault of the Franks. Boha-Eddin, an eyewitness, having quitted the Mussulman centre, which was put to the rout, fled to the tent of the Sultan, whom he found attended only by seventeen Mamelukes. While their enemies fled in this manner, the Christians, hardly able to credit their victory, remained on the field which they had conquered. They were engaged in tending their wounded, and in collecting the arms which lay scattered over the field of battle, when all at once twenty thousand Saracens, whom their chief had rallied, fell upon them. The Crusaders, overwhelmed with heat and fatigue, and not expecting to be attacked, showed at first a surprise which bordered on fear. Taki-Eddin, nephew of Saladin, led on the Turks, at the head of whom were seen the Mameluke guard of Saladin, distinguished by their yellow banner. So vehement was their onset, that it ploughed deep into the Crusaders’ ranks; and they had need of the presence and example of Richard, before whom no Saracen could stand, and whom the contemporary chronicles compare to a reaper cutting down corn. At the moment when the Christians, again victorious, resumed their march towards Assur, the Mussulmans, impelled by despair, again attacked their rearguard. Richard, who had twice repulsed the enemy, no sooner heard the outcry, than, followed only by fifteen knights, he flew to the scene of combat, shouting aloud the war-cry of the Christians—‘God protect the Holy Sepulchre!’ The bravest followed their king; the Mussulmans were dispersed at the first shock, and their army, then a third time vanquished, would have been totally destroyed, had not night and the forest of Assur sheltered them from the pursuit of the enemy. As it was, they lost eight thousand men, including thirty-two of their bravest emirs slain; while the victory did not cost the Christians a thousand men. Among the wounded was Richard himself, who was slightly hurt in the breast. But the victory was prodigious, and if duly improved by the Crusaders, without dissension or defection, would have decided the fate of Palestine and of that Crusade.”—*Hist. des Croisades*, i. 468–471.

These extracts convey a fair idea of M. Michaud’s power of description and merits as an historian. He cannot be said to be one of the highest class. He does not belong to the school who aim at elevating history to its loftiest pitch. The antiquarian school never have, and never will do so. The minute observation and prodigious attentions to detail which their habits produce, are inconsistent with extensive

vision. The same eye scarcely ever unites the powers of the microscope and the telescope. He has neither the philosophic mind of Guizot, nor the pictorial eye of Gibbon ; he neither takes a luminous glance like Robertson, nor sums up the arguments of a generation in a page, like Hume. We shall look in vain in his pages for a few words diving into the human heart such as we find in Tacitus, or splendid pictures riveting every future age as in Livy. He is rather an able and animated abridger of the chronicles, than an historian. But in that subordinate, though very important department, his merits are of a very high order. He is faithful, accurate, and learned ; he has given a succinct and yet interesting detail, founded entirely on original authority, of the wars of two centuries. Above all, his principles are elevated, his feelings warm, his mind lofty and generous. He is worthy of his subject, for he is entirely free of the grovelling utilitarian spirit, the disgrace and the bane of the age in which he writes. His talents for description are very considerable, as will be apparent from the account we hope to give in a future Number of his highly interesting travels to the principal scenes of the Crusades. It is only to be regretted, that in his anxiety to preserve the fidelity of his narrative, he has so frequently restrained it, and given us rather descriptions of scenes taken from the old chronicles, than such as his own observations and taste could have supplied. But still his work supplies a great desideratum in European literature ; and if not the best that could be conceived, is by much the best that has yet appeared on the subject. And it is written in the spirit of the age so finely expressed in the title given by one of the most interesting of the ancient chroniclers to his work—"Gesta DEI per Francos."*

* The doings of God by the Franks.

THE CARLIST STRUGGLE IN SPAIN

[BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, MAY 1837]

AMIDST all our declamations in favour of the lights of the age, and the extraordinary influence of the press, and the extension of journals in diffusing correct ideas on every subject of policy, foreign and domestic, it may be doubted whether there is to be found in the whole history of human delusion, not even excepting the benighted ages of Papal despotism, or the equally dark era of Napoleon's tyranny, an example of ignorance so complete and general as has prevailed in this country, for the last seven years, as to the affairs of Spain. While a contest has been going on there during all that period between constitutional right and revolutionary spoliation ; while the Peninsula has been convulsed by the long-protracted conflict between legal government and democratic despotism ; while the same cause which has been supported since 1830 in Great Britain by the arms of reasoning, eloquence, or influence, has there been carried on with the edge of the sword ; while for the last four years a struggle has been maintained by the Basque mountaineers for their rights and their liberties, their hearths and their religion, which history will place beside the glories of Marathon and Salamis, of Naefels and Morgarten ; while a heroic Prince and his heroic followers have borne up against a load of oppression, foreign and domestic, in defence of legal right and constitutional freedom, with a courage and skill rarely paralleled in the annals of military achievement, the great bulk of the English nation have looked with supineness or indifference on the glorious spectacle. They have been deceived, and willingly deceived, by the endless falsehoods which the revolutionary press and the holders of

Spanish bonds spread abroad on this subject; they have been carried away by the false and slanderous appellations bestowed on Don Carlos; they have been mystified by a denial of his clear and irresistible title to the throne, they have not duly considered the stern and inexorable *necessity* which *compelled* him to abandon the humane system of warfare which he at first adopted, and retaliate upon his enemies the atrocious and murderous rule of war which they had so long practised against him and his followers; and by their supineness permitted the royal arms of England to be implicated in the most savage crusade ever undertaken in modern times against the liberty of mankind, and allowed a band of brave but deluded mercenaries to prolong to their own and their country's eternal disgrace a frightful conflict between sordid democratic despotism, striving to elevate itself on the ruins of its country, and the freeborn bravery of unconquerable patriots.

We take blame to ourselves on this subject; we confess ourselves implicated in the charge which, through all the succeeding ages of the world, will attach to the name of England, for its deplorable concern in this heroic conflict, which will go far to obliterate the recollection of all its memorable exertions in the cause of freedom. The calamity is not the defeat sustained at St Sebastian or Hernani: not the disgrace of English regiments being routed and driven back at the point of the bayonet in shameful confusion. These stains are easily wiped out: the national courage, when brought into the field in a just cause, will soon obliterate the recollection of the defeat which was sustained in supporting that of cruelty and injustice. The real disgrace—the calamity which England has indeed to mourn, is that of having joined in an alliance to beat down the liberties of mankind; of having sent forth a band of mercenary troops to oppress and massacre our faithful allies; of having combined with France, in defiance alike of the faith of treaties and the rules of international law, to deprive a gallant prince of his rightful inheritance; of having sent out the royal forces of England, under the old flag of Wellington, to aid a set of cut-throats and assassins, of robbers and plunderers, in carrying fire and sword, mourning and despair, through the valleys of a simple

and virtuous people, combined in no other cause but that of loyalty and patriotism.

“Woe unto those,” says the Scripture, “who call evil good, and good evil ; for theirs is the greater damnation.” It is in this fatal delusion—in the confusion of ideas produced by transposing the *names of things*, and calling the cause of despotism that of freedom, merely because it is supported by Urban despots—and that of freedom slavery, because it is upheld by rural patriots, that the true cause of this hideous perversion, not merely of national character, but even of party consistency, is to be found. We are perfectly persuaded that, if the people of England were aware of the *real* nature of the cause in which they embarked a gallant but unfortunate band of adventurers ; if the government were aware of the *real* tendency of the quasi-intervention which they have carried on, both the one and the other would recoil with horror from the measures which they have so long sanctioned. But both were deluded by the name of freedom ; both were carried away by the absurd mania for the extension of democratic institutions into countries wholly unprepared for them ; and both thought they were upholding the cause of liberty and the ultimate interests of Great Britain, by supporting a band who have proved themselves to be the most selfish, corrupt, and despotic tyrants who ever yet rose to transient greatness upon the misery and degradation of their country. But, while we thus absolve both the government and the country from intentional abuse of power in the deplorable transactions which both have sanctioned, there is a limit beyond which this forbearance cannot be extended.

This result of our shameful intervention to oppress the free, and aid the murderers in massacring the innocent, is now fixed and unalterable, and in no degree dependent on the future issue of the contest. What that may finally be, God only knows. It is possible, doubtless, that the weight of the Quadruple Alliance—the direct intervention of France—the insidious support of England—the exhaustion of a protracted contest—and the extirpation of the population capable of bearing arms in the Basque Provinces, may beat down these heroic mountaineers, and establish amidst blood and ashes, anguish and mourning, the cruel oppression of the

Madrid democrats in the lovely valleys of Navarre:—"Quum solitudinem fecerunt, pacem appellant." In that case, the interest of the struggle will be enhanced by its tragic termination; the sympathies, the indignant sympathies of mankind in every future age, will be with the unfortunate brave: like the Poles or the Girondists, the errors of their former conduct will all be forgotten in the Roman heroism of their fall. They will take their place in history beside their ancestors in Numantia and Saguntum, who preferred throwing themselves into the flames to the hated dominion of the stranger; and the Saragossans or Geronists in later days, who perished in combating the formidable legions of Napoleon, or the gallant patriots, who, with Kosciusko, shed their last blood when the grenadiers of Suwarroff were storming the entrenchments of Prague, and the Vistula ran red with Polish blood. Or it may be, that Providence has reserved a different destiny for these gallant patriots, and that on this, as on so many previous occasions, the God of battles will bless the righteous side. In that case, their struggle will form one of the most animating periods in the page of history—one of the bright and consoling spots in the annals of human suffering, to which the patriot will point in every succeeding age as the animating example of successful virtue, at the recital of which the hearts of the generous will throb, so long as valour and constancy shall be appreciated upon earth.

We speak thus warmly, because we feel strongly; because we sympathise from the bottom of our hearts with the cause of freedom all over the world. But we are not deluded, as so many of our countrymen are, who never look beyond the surface of things, by the mere assumption of false names. We have learned from our own experience, as well as the annals of history, that tyranny, plunder, and oppression can stalk in the rear of the tricolor flag, and that urban multitudes can be roused by a ruthless band of sordid revolutionists, to their own and their country's ultimate ruin. We have learned also from the same sources of information, that hearts can beat as warmly for the cause of freedom, and arms combat as bravely in its defence on the mountain as on the plain, in the sequestered valley as in the crowded city, under the banners of religion and loyalty as under the

standard of treason and perfidy. We yield to none in the ardent love of liberty ; but what we call liberty is the lasting protection of the rights and privileges of all classes of the people, not the trampling them under foot, to suit the fanciful theories of visionary enthusiasts, or the sordid speculations of Stock Exchange revolutionists. We look around us, and behold liberty still flourishing in the British isles, after a hundred and fifty years' duration, under the banner of religion and loyalty, despite all the efforts of infidel democracy for its destruction. We cast our eyes to the other side of the Channel, and we see freedom perishing, both in France and Spain, after unheard-of calamities, under the ascendancy of a revolutionary and freethinking generation. Taught by these great examples, we have learned to cling the more closely to the faith and the maxims of our fathers ; to see in the principles of religion and loyalty the only secure foundation for real freedom ; and to expect the ultimate triumph of constitutional principles, not from the sudden irruption of bloodthirsty fanatics, or the selfish ambition of rapacious democrats, but from the gradual and pacific growth of a middle class in society, under the protecting influence of a durable government.

We make these remarks, too, in the full knowledge of the hideous massacres which have so long disfigured this unhappy war ; having before our eyes the Durango decree, and the Carlist executions ; and yielding to none in horror at these sanguinary atrocities, and the most ardent wish for their termination. We make them also, after fully admitting that if this frightful system *had begun* with the Carlists, or had even been adopted by them under the influence of any other cause than the sense of unbearable executions of a similar kind *previously* suffered by them, and *commenced* by the Revolutionists, and the overwhelming necessity of mournful retaliation, not only would their cause be unworthy of the sympathy of any brave or good man, but that Don Carlos himself would "be a monster unfit to live." But admitting all this, we see it as clearly proved as any proposition in geometry, that this execrable system *began with the Spanish democrats, and them alone*, and was never resorted to by the Carlists, till *years after they had suffered under its atrocious execution by their enemies* ; and the Carlist

valleys were filled with mourning from the death of old men, women, and children, murdered in cold blood by the democratic tyrants who sought to plunder and enslave them. And in such circumstances, we know that retaliation, however dreadful and mournful an extremity, *is unavoidable*; and that brave and humane men are forced, like Zumalacargui, to sentence prisoners to be shot, even when the order, as it did from him, draws tears like rain from their eyes. Unquestionably none can admire more than we do the noble proclamation of the Duke of York in 1793, in answer to the savage orders of the Directory to the revolutionary armies of France to give no quarter. None can feel greater exultation at the humane conduct of the Vendéans, who, in reply to a similar order from their inhuman oppressors, sent eleven thousand prisoners back, merely with their heads shaved, to the Republican lines. But it belongs to the prosperous and the secure to act upon such generous and noble principles; the endurance of cold-blooded cruelty, the pangs of murdered innocence, the sight of parents and children slaughtered, will drive, and in every age have driven, the most mild and humane to the dreadful but unavoidable system of retaliation.

We know that the Vendéans themselves, despite all the heroic humanity of their chiefs, were forced in the end to retaliate upon their enemies the system of giving no quarter. We know that Charette, for the two last years of his career, found it impossible to act on any other principle. We go back to the annals of our own country, and we see in them too melancholy proof, that even in the sober-minded, or it may be right-thinking, inhabitants of the British isles, a certain endurance of suffering, and the commencement of a cruel system of war by one party, will at all times drive their antagonists into a hideous course of reprisals. Have we forgotten that, in the wars of the Roses, quarter was refused on both sides by the contending armies for nine long years; and that eighty princes of the blood and almost all the nobility of England were put to death, and very many of them in cold blood, by the ruthless cruelty of English armies? Have we forgotten that utter destruction was vowed by the Scottish Covenanters against the Irish auxiliaries in Montrose's army; and that they carried their vengeance so far

as to drown at the bridge of Linlithgow even their innocent babes? Have we forgotten the cruel atrocities of the Irish Rebellion, or the firm retaliation of the indignant Orangemen? Seeing, then, that a certain extremity of suffering, and the endurance of a certain amount of cruelty by international opponents, will, in all ages and in all nations, even the most moderate and humane, induce the dreadful necessity of retaliation, we look with pity, though with poignant grief, on the stern reprisals to which Don Carlos has been driven, and earnestly pray that similar civil discord may long be averted from the British isles; and that we may not be doomed by a righteous Providence, as we perhaps deserve, to undergo the unutterable wretchedness, which our uncalled for and unjust support of those who *began* the execrable system of murder has so long produced in the Spanish peninsula.

In attempting to make amends for our hitherto apparent neglect of this interesting subject, we rejoice to think that the materials by which we can now vindicate the righteous cause, and explain to our deluded countrymen the gross injustice of which they have been rendered the unconscious instruments, have, within these last few months, been signally enlarged. First, Captain Henningsen's animated and graphic narrative enlisted our sympathies in favour of the gallant mountaineers, beside whom he drew the sword of freedom. Next, Mr Honan's able and well-informed work unfolded still more fully the nature of the contest, and the resources from which the Basque peasantry have maintained so long and surprising a struggle in defence of their privileges against all the forces which have been arrayed against them. Then Lord Caernarvon's admirable disquisition on the war, annexed to his highly interesting tour in the Portuguese provinces, gave to the statements of his excellent predecessors the weight of his authority, the aid of his learning, and the support of his eloquence. Though last, not least, Mr Walton has taken the field with two octavo volumes, which throw a flood of light on the real nature of the contest now raging in the Peninsula, the objects of the parties engaged, the claims of the competitors to the throne, the consequences of the triumph of the one or the other on the future interests of religion and freedom, the

cruel severities to which the Carlists were subjected by their bloodthirsty enemies before they were reluctantly driven to retaliation, and the frightful consequences which have resulted, and must continue to result while it endures, from our iniquitous co-operation with the cause of oppression. All these momentous topics are treated in the volumes before us with a clearness, temper, moderation, and ability which leave nothing to be desired, and render them by far the most important work on the affairs of the Peninsula which has yet issued from the European press. When we see the ability and candour, the courage and energy, the learning and eloquence, which, unbought by the gold of the Stock Exchange, uninfluenced by speculations in Spanish bonds, unsolicited by the rewards of a deceived Administration, is thus generously and gratuitously coming forward from so many quarters at once in defence of the cause of religious truth and independence, we recognise the revival of the spirit of Old England; we indulge a hope that the press may yet work off its own impurities; and we are ready to take our humble part in so good a cause, and bear with equanimity the torrent of abuse with which the servile writers of the Treasury, or the hireling scribes of the Stock Exchange, will assail our endeavours to give greater publicity than, in a selfish and engrossed age, they might otherwise obtain to these all-important disclosures.

From the statements proved, and the documents brought forward, in Mr Walton's work, it is manifest—1. That the constitution of 1812, so long the darling object of democratic contention in the Peninsula, and now the avowed basis of its government, is an ultra-republican system, which never obtained the legal consent of the nation, but was merely imposed on their countrymen for their own selfish ends by a knot of urban democrats at Cadiz, who at that unhappy period, when four-fifths of the country was occupied by the French armies, had contrived to usurp the powers, not only of sovereignty, but of remodelling the state. 2. That it is not only utterly unsuitable to the Spanish people, and necessarily productive of (as it ever has produced) nothing but plunder, massacre, and democratic oppression; but is of so absurd and ill-considered a char-

acter as even, if established in England, amidst a people habituated for centuries to the exercise of freedom, would tear society to atoms in six months. 3. That, from experience of the devastating effects of this ultra-radical constitution, and the sordid cupidity of the democratic agents whom it instantly brings to the head of affairs, the great majority of the Spanish nation, almost all who are distinguished by their patriotism, principle, or good sense, are decidedly opposed to its continuance ; that though often established by military violence or democratic intrigue, it has ever fallen to the ground by its own weight when not upheld, as it now is, by powerful foreign co-operation ; and that at this moment, if this co-operation were really withdrawn, it would sink to the dust in three months, with all its accessories of democratic spoliation, royalist blood, and universal suffering, never more to rise. 4. That the democratic party, since the time that nine-tenths of the nation had become the decided enemies of their usurpation, fell upon the expedient of engrafting the maintenance of their cause upon a disputed succession to the throne,—prevailed on Ferdinand VII., when in a state of dotage, to alter the law of royal succession in favour of his infant daughter,—got together the farce of a Cortes, to give their sanction to the illegal act,—and have since contrived to keep her on the throne, as a mere puppet, to serve as a cover to their revolutionary designs, despite the clearly proved voice of the nation, by filling the army and all civil offices with their own creatures, and maintaining an usurped and hateful usurpation by the aid of urban democracy, foreign co-operation, and stock-jobbing assistance. 5. That the title of Don Carlos to the throne is clear, not less on the legitimate principle of legal succession, which we were bound, in the most solemn manner, by the treaty of Utrecht, to guarantee, than on the liberal principle of a violation of the social contract, and a trampling under foot all the rights and privileges of the people, dissolving the title of a sovereign, how well founded soever in itself, to the supreme direction of affairs. 6. That the frightful system of murdering the prisoners was first introduced by the revolutionists ; that it was carried on with ruthless severity and heartless rigour by them *for years before it was imitated by the*

Royalists ; that they have repeatedly made endeavours, both publicly and privately, to put a stop to its continuance, but always been foiled by the refusal of their savage antagonists. 7. That the English auxiliaries, both under General Evans and Lord John Hay, lent their powerful aid to the Revolutionary party, not only without the English government having made any effectual stipulation in favour of the abandoning that atrocious system of warfare, but at a time when, without such aid, the war was on the point of being brought to a glorious termination by the freeborn mountaineers of Biscay and Navarre, and have thus become implicated, through the fault or neglect of their government, in all the woful consequences of a continuance of the struggle. 8. That the stand made by the Basque provinces is for their rights and liberties, their privileges and immunities, enjoyed by their ancestors for five hundred years, asserted by them in every age with a constancy and spirit exceeding even the far-famed resolution of the Swiss Cantons, but which *were all reft from them at one fell swoop* by the ruthless tyranny of a democratic despotism.

It is impossible, in the limits of a brief essay, to quote all the documents, or detail all the facts, which Mr Walton has accumulated, with irresistible force, to prove every one of these propositions. If any one doubts them, we earnestly recommend him to study his work ; and if he is not convinced, we say without hesitation, neither would he be persuaded though one rose from the dead. But even in this cursory notice a few leading facts may be brought forward, which cannot fail to throw a clear light on this important subject, and may tend to aid the efforts of those brave and enlightened men who are now striving to prevent British blood from being any longer shed in the most unjust of causes, and hinder the British standards from being any longer unfurled, in the name of freedom and liberty, to uphold the cause of infidelity, rapine, and oppression.

Of the manner in which the Constitution of 1812 was fabricated by a *clique* of urban agitators, and thrust, amidst the agonies of the war with Napoleon, on an unconscious or unwilling nation, the following account is given by our author :—

"In the decrees and other preparations made by the central junta, in anticipation of the meeting of Cortes, the old mode of convening the national assembly had been abandoned, the illuminati congregated at Seville being of opinion 'that the ancient usages were more a matter of historical research than of practical importance.' It was therefore agreed, that in their stead a new electoral law should be framed, more congenial to the general principle of representation; the result of which was, that those cities which had deputies in the Cortes last assembled were to have a voice, as well as the superior juntas, and that one deputy should besides be elected for every fifty thousand souls. It was also settled that the South American provinces, at the time actually in a state of insurrection, should, for the present, have substitutes chosen for them, until they sent over delegates duly elected. It is a curious fact, that on the 18th of the previous April Joseph Bonaparte convened Cortes, and it was at the time thought that this example served to stimulate the central junta to perform their long forgotten promise.

"The new-fashioned Cortes opened on the 24th of September, consisting only of popular deputies, or one estate, the other two being excluded. When the inaugural ceremonies were over, the members assembled declared themselves legally constituted in 'general and extraordinary Cortes,' in whom the national sovereignty resided; or, in other words, they at once declared themselves a constituent assembly.

"In one respect, the assembly of the Spanish Cortes of 1810 resembled that of the French States-general in 1791, the members being mostly new men whose names had scarcely been heard of before. In another sense, the disparity between the two assemblies was great. The States-general opened their sittings under legal forms, with the three orders, and, after stormy debates, one state ejected or absorbed the other two, when the triumphant party, declaring themselves a constituent assembly, proceeded to enact laws and frame a constitution; in the end, rendering themselves superior to the authority which had convened them, and no longer responsible to those whom they were intended to represent. The Cadiz Cortes adopted a readier and less complicated plan. In utter defiance of legal forms and ancient usages, *the Spanish Commons beforehand excluded the two privileged estates*; and assembling entirely on their own account, *at once voted themselves to be a constituent assembly*, possessing all the essential attributes of sovereignty, and deliberately proceeded to imitate the example of their Parisian prototypes.

"The examples given in our early pages show the little analogy between the ancient and new Cortes. The latter did not meet to supply the want of a regal power, to provide means of defence, obtain the redress of grievances, or reconcile opposite and jarring interests. Their object was not to heal the wounds in the state, to introduce order and concert, or remove those obstacles which had hitherto impeded the progress of the national cause. As the genuine offspring of the central junta, they rather thought of *seizing upon power, enjoying its sweets*, and carrying into effect those theories with a fondness for which an admiration of the French Revolution had infected many leading members, some of whom were anxious to shine after the manner of Mirabeau,—whilst others thought they could emulate the example of Abbé Sièyes, or took Brissot as their model. In a word, wholly unpractised in the science of legislation, and unmindful that the enemy was at their gates, they set to work with a full determination to tread in the footsteps of the French Constituent Assembly, and began by a vote similar to that passed by our House of Commons in 1648, whereby they declared that *the sovereign power exclusively resided in them*,—and, consequently, that whatever they enacted was law, without the consent of either king, peers, or clergy."

The ruinous step by which, to the exclusion of the real representatives of the nation, a band of urban revolutionists contrived to thrust themselves into the supreme direction of the Constituent Assembly in the Isle of Leon, is thus explained :—

“ On the 10th September 1810, a fortnight before the opening of the Cortes, the regents issued an edict, accompanied by a decree, in which the impossibility of obtaining proper representatives from the ultra-marine provinces and those occupied by the enemy is lamented, and a plan devised to remedy the defect, by means of substitutes chosen upon the spot. It was accordingly ordained that twenty-three persons should be *picked out to represent the places held by the French, and thirty for the Indies*; which number of substitutes, incorporated with the real delegates already arrived, or about to arrive, it was thought would compose a respectable congress, sufficient, under existing circumstances, to open the house and carry on business, even although others should unfortunately not arrive.*

From the official records of the Cortes, it appears that its numbers stood thus :—

Members returned by provinces of Spain unoccupied by the French,	127
Substitutes provided at Cadiz for the others,	45

“ It would be almost insulting to the judgment of the reader to offer any remarks upon either the illegality or the incongruity of a legislature composed of such elements as the preceding sketch presents. Independently of a total abandonment of ancient usages, and an utter disregard of the elective franchise practised in former times; besides the exclusion of two estates, and the enlargement of the third on a basis not only impracticable, but also ridiculous; substitutes are put in to represent an infinitely larger proportion of territory in both hemispheres than that which, with the free agency of the inhabitants, is enabled to return representatives, elected according to the scale proposed by the conveners of the Cortes themselves, founded on rules of their own framing. The *representative principle was thus entirely lost*; and how a party of politicians and philosophers, circumscribed to a small spot of ground, and protected only by the naval force of an ally, could during eighteen months sit quietly down and frame a constitution for the acceptance of nearly thirty millions of people, situated in three quarters of the globe, and opposed in interests as well as in habits, on a plan so defective in all its parts, is the most extraordinary of the many singularities which marked the Spanish contest.

“ In the new representative plan, neither population nor wealth was taken as a basis. Valencia, with 1,040,740 souls, was allowed nineteen deputies; whilst Granada, including Malaga, and containing 1,100,640, had only two. The ancient kingdom of Navarre, with 271,285 souls; Biscay, with 130,000; Guipuscoa, with 126,789; and Alava, with 85,139, are rated at one each; whereas, the mountains of Ronda had two. Spain, with 14,000,000 of souls, is set down at 154 deputies; when the South American and Asiatic provinces, by the central junta declared integral and equal parts of the monarchy, and containing a population of more than 17,000,000, were represented by 54. Never was anything more monstrous than the organisation of the Cadiz legislature, more opposed to the practice in ancient times, or more at variance with the objects for which

* “ *For the electors and the elected the only qualifications required were to be a householder and twenty-five years of age!* ”

the Cortes were to meet. It was not even in accordance with the wild theories of the day. The absence of opposition was the only sanction given to their labours ; a circumstance which may be easily accounted for in the existing state of the Peninsula."

These Revolutionists were not long in invoking the aid of the same principles which, emanating from the Jacobins of Paris, had consigned France to slavery and Europe to blood. "Eight or nine journals were immediately established in Cadiz, of which one was called *The Robespierre*."

"The principles proclaimed by the constitution, if possible, are more monstrous than the manner in which it was constructed. It begins by declaring that the legislature is composed of the general and extraordinary Cortes of the Spanish nations represented by deputies from Spain, America, and Asia ; that the national sovereignty resides in the Cortes, and that the power of making laws belongs to them jointly with the king ; that *the population is to be taken as a basis for the new electoral law, without any defined qualification for eligibility* ; that the Cortes were to meet *every year*, and, on closing, leave a permanent deputation sitting, to watch over the observance of the constitution, report infractions, and convene the legislature in extraordinary cases ; and that the king should be at the head of the executive and sanction the laws. A new plan was also formed for the government of the provinces, the election of municipalities, the assessment of taxes, and a variety of other purposes. In a word, the Cadiz code *deprived the king of the power of dissolving or proroguing the Cortes*, and in other respects *destroyed the royal prerogative*, as well as feudal tenures and the rights of property. It confounded the various classes, reduced the power of the clergy, extinguished the civil rights of a whole community, cancelled all previous compacts made between the sovereign and the people, broke the bond of union, tore asunder the charters, confiscated the privileges and franchises so highly valued by the inhabitants, and, in a word, *obliterated every line and feature of the ancient institutions*, by transforming Spain into the reverse of what she had been. It was a sweeping proscription of every privileged and corporate body in the country, annihilating the whole, and leaving neither wreck nor vestige behind."

Of this constitution, which is now the constitution of Spain, which the arms, ay, the *Royal arms* of England are employed to uphold, it is sufficient to say that it establishes — 1. UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE ; 2. ONE LEGISLATIVE CHAMBER ; 3. ANNUAL PARLIAMENTS ; 4. It annihilates all the power of the nobles and clergy ; 5. Sweeps away all corporate rights and feudal privileges ; 6. Exterminates the *whole royal prerogative*. How long would the British empire withstand the shock of such a constitution ? Not one week.

Even before it was brought into operation, or the French armies had been driven by British valour from the soil of Spain, the ruinous effect of this monstrous constitution was

so clearly perceived, that the democratic despots were fearful of its overthrow.

“Such a transition as that which this code was calculated to effect, was too sudden and too violent not to meet with decided opposition. Its leveling principles and subversive doctrines were accordingly denounced from the pulpit and by the press. Every epithet of odium and contempt was applied to its officious framers; and so great was the apprehension of disturbances entertained by the Government itself, that, within a month after its promulgation, they prevented arms from being intrusted to the Galician peasantry. Individuals of rank and influence were banished for merely expressing their disapprobation of its provisions, or their dread of the calamities which it was likely to produce.”

The fate of this monstrous democratic abortion is well known. On Ferdinand's accession it fell to the ground from its own weight; not a sword required to be drawn, or a shot fired, to dissolve the destructive fabric. His famous decree from Valencia, on May 4, at once extinguished the Cadiz constitution. In that instrument, Ferdinand justly said—

“To this Cortes, in 1810, convened in a manner never practised in Spain, even in the most arduous cases, and in the turbulent times of minorities, when the meeting of deputies has been more numerous than in usual and ordinary Cortes, the estates of the nobility and clergy were not called, notwithstanding the central junta ordered this to be done by a decree, artfully concealed from the council of regency, who were equally unaware that to them the junta had assigned the presidency of the Cortes; a prerogative which otherwise would never have been left at the will of the Congress. Everything was thus placed at the disposal of the Cortes, who, on the very day of their installation, and as a commencement of their acts, stripped me of the sovereignty which the deputies themselves had just before acknowledged, nominally attributing it to the nation, in order to appropriate it to themselves, and by this usurpation enact such laws as they deemed fit, imposing on the people the obligation of forcibly receiving them in the form of a new constitution, which the deputies established, and afterwards sanctioned and published in 1812, without powers from either provinces, towns, or juntas, and without even the knowledge of those said to be represented by the substitutes of Spain and the Indies.

“This first outrage against the royal prerogative was, as it were, a basis for the many others which followed; and, notwithstanding the repugnance of many deputies, laws were enacted, adopted, and called fundamental ones, amidst the cries, threats, and violence of those who frequented the Cortes galleries; whereby to that which was only the work of a faction the specious colouring of the general will was given, and for such made to pass among a few seditious persons at Cadiz, and afterwards at Madrid. These are notorious facts; and thus were those good laws altered which once constituted the felicity of our nation. The ancient form of the monarchy was changed, and by copying the revolutionary and democratic principles of the French constitution of 1791, were sanctioned, not the fundamental laws of a moderate monarchy, but rather those of a popular government, with a chief magistrate at its head—a mere delegated executive, and not a king, notwithstanding the introduction of the name as a deception to the uncautious.”

The joy of the nation at this pacific liberation from their revolutionary tyrants knew no bounds. It was like that of the English on the Restoration. The journey of the king from Valencia to the capital was a continued triumph.

“Some members and other flaming patriots proposed open resistance, but soon found that they possessed neither physical nor moral power. As far as outward appearances went, they preserved their consistency, or rather their delirium, till the close. Some of the most vociferous were however seized; and this put an end to the show of opposition. Ferdinand VII. entered the capital on the 14th, amidst general acclamations and other demonstrations of joy. Persons present attest that never did Madrid witness such a scene of general exultation. When the king alighted, the people took him up in their arms, and triumphantly showed him to the immense concourse assembled in front of the palace, and in their arms conveyed him to his apartment. From Aranjuez to Madrid, his carriage had been previously drawn by the people. In the afternoon of the 16th he walked through several parts of the town, the streets thronged with spectators; but not a single constitutionalist ventured to show his face.”

We have dwelt the longer on the original illegal formation and revolutionary principles of the constitution, because this lies in truth at the bottom of the whole question. The Cadiz democrats, like all other reckless revolutionists, bestowed on the nation at once, without either preparation or reason, the prodigal gift of unbounded political influence. The whole powers of government were by them vested in one Chamber: the Cortes combined the powers of the executive and legislature in England, being vested at once with the exclusive right of imposing taxes, passing laws, declaring war and peace. These vast powers were vested in *one single assembly*, unfettered by any separate House of Peers, or the representation of the clergy in any shape. And how was this omnipotent assembly chosen? By *universal suffrage*; by the votes of every man in Spain who had a house and was twenty-five years of age. No qualification was required either in the electors or the representatives. A majority of beggars might rule the state, and dispose at will of all the property it contained!!!

The urban revolutionists of Spain, an ardent, energetic, insolvent class, instantly perceived the enormous advantages which this extravagant constitution gave them. They saw clearly that under this radical constitution they would in fact be the rulers of the state; that its whole offices, emoluments, influence, and property would ere long be at their disposal; and that by simply sticking to that one point,

“the constitution of 1812,” they would soon, and without bloodshed as they hoped, and by the mere force of legislative enactment, strip all the holders of property, not only of their influence, but of their possessions. In the few great towns, accordingly, which the Peninsula contains, in Madrid, Cadiz, Seville, Barcelona, Valencia, Bilbao, and Malaga, a *clique* of agitators was immediately formed, who, destitute of property, education, or character, were yet formidable to the holders of property over the kingdom by their influence over the population in these great centres of profligacy, pauperism, and ambition. They were closely held together by the hellish bond of anticipated plunder. Freedom, liberty, and independence were ever in their mouths; tyranny, plunder, massacre unceasingly in their hearts. But though a miserable minority, not amounting to a tenth part of the whole nation, they had great advantages in the political strife in which they were engaged, from their position in the great fortified towns of the kingdom, from their sway over the depraved and deluded populace, from the rapid communication which they maintained with each other, from the want of union, organisation, or intelligence among their rural antagonists; from the possession of a plausible *cri de guerre*, “the constitution of 1812,” which was supposed to be a sovereign charm by its supporters for every evil; and from the union, energy, and resolution which present insolvency, and the prospect of future plunder, had diffused universally through their ranks.

It is the more material to attend to these considerations, because it is the struggle to re-establish this radical constitution which is the real matter that has ever since been at issue between the two parties in the Peninsula. The Queen at Madrid was from the first a mere puppet; the *Estatuto Real* a mere instalment; the revolt of La Granja brought to light their real prospects, and revealed, in its pristine nakedness, the violence and iniquity of the democratic faction. By it the constitution of 1812 has again become the basis of the constitution: a nocturnal revolt, an irruption into the bed-chamber of the Queen, a drunken sergeant and ten treasonable grenadiers, were sufficient to overthrow the phantom of a constitutional monarchy, which, as a mask to their ulterior designs, the revolutionists had set up. And

it is to support *such a cause*, to establish such a *revolutionary regime*, that General Evans and his unhappy band have been exposed to defeat and dishonour, and £500,000 worth of arms and ammunition sent to the democrats of the Peninsula, and the Royal flag of England displayed beside the abettors of spoliation, robbery, and murder!

The evils experienced and anticipated from this radical constitution, however, were so powerful, that it probably never again would have reared its hated head in Spain, were it not that in an evil hour Ferdinand VII. resolved upon an expedition to South America in 1821, to subdue the revolted provinces, and assembled 20,000 men in the Isle of Leon for that purpose. This distant service was to the last degree unpopular in the Spanish army; its inglorious dangers, its certain hardships, its boundless fatigues, its remote situation, its probable disastrous termination, were present to every mind, and filled both officers and men with the most gloomy presentiments, and left them in that state of moody despair when the most desperate and flagitious projects are most likely to be embraced with alacrity. The presence of 20,000 men close to Cadiz or within its walls, influenced by these feelings, was too favourable an opportunity for the revolutionists in that great centre of democracy to let slip for re-establishing their hated dominion. While the troops were waiting for the transports to convey them across the Atlantic, which, with the usual want of foresight in the Spanish character, were very long of being prepared, intrigues were actively set on foot by the Cadiz *clique*; and in the subaltern officers of the army, which is almost wholly destitute of men of property in Spain, and filled with mere adventurers, they found the most ready reception. Soldiers, unless restrained by preponderance of property and education in their officers, are never averse to playing the part of prætorians; they are seldom disinclined to setting an empire up to sale. The glittering prospect, on the one hand, of escaping a perilous, hateful, and inglorious foreign service, and on the other, disposing of the whole emoluments and advantages of government for themselves or their connexions, was more than the military adventurers of the Isle of Leon could withstand; they revolted; raised the cry of "The constitution of 1812," amidst the transports of the demo-

cratic party over all Spain ; and the King, destitute of any military force to withstand so formidable an insurrection, was, after a trifling attempt at resistance, forced into submission. The promised boon was not withheld from the traitor soldiers, who had, by violating their oaths, brought about the revolution ; they were retained at home ; the expedition against South America was laid aside, and the crown of the Indies for ever lost to the throne of Castile. But what was that to the Spanish democrats ? What did it signify that the empire was dismembered, and the Transatlantic colonies consigned to anarchy, despotism, and suffering, unparalleled in modern times ? They had got to the head of affairs ; the pillar of the constitution was raised in every considerable town of Spain ; the Cadiz clique had become prime ministers ; and every province of the Peninsula was placed under the rule of a set of low, rapacious, revolutionary employés, who made use of all their authority to promote the election of such extreme deputies for the Cortes as might insure the total revolutionising of the state.

Even while the Liberals lay at Cadiz, they had begun their system of rapacious iniquity.

“ M. Alcala Galiano,” says Walton, “ assisted in a civil capacity, and when the mutineers were shut up in La Isla, wrote the principal proclamations and addresses which served to extend the insurrection. On reaching Madrid, this civilian became one of the leading speakers at the debating society of the *Fontana de Oro*, and was afterwards named Intendant of Cordova. In 1822 he was elected to the Cortes, from which period he is classed among the leaders of the *exaltados*. His speeches were marked with impetuosity and extreme liberalism ; but his ideas were not always regular, or his conduct consistent. He was among the emigrants in this country, and a warm admirer of radicalism,—a blessing of which the last importation into Spain has been pretty extensive. The latter part of his political career was the most successful, his labours having been crowned with the appointment of Minister of Marine. Whilst the army remained at La Isla, *the naval arsenals were completely gutted. The copper, brass cannon, rigging, and other valuables, were sold to the Gibraltar Jews, who ascended the river of Santi Petri and fetched their purchases away.*”

The worshippers of the constitution of 1812 were not slow in beginning with the first and greatest of all revolutionary projects, the confiscation of the property of the church.

“ Various reports,” says Mr Walton, “ on the poverty of the treasury, the annual deficit, the arrears of pay, and a variety of other financial matters, had been submitted to the Chamber, and produced no small degree of embarrassment. The expedient of a foreign loan was adopted ; and it being no longer necessary to temporise with the clergy, a plan was formed for *the appropriation of church property*, which it was supposed would yield an

abundant harvest. By a decree passed October 1st, the monasteries were suppressed, excepting a certain number, and also several of the military orders, the revenues of which, it was agreed, should be set apart for the payment of the national debt, after pensions had been secured to Riega, Quiroga, and the other leaders of the La Isla mutiny. The inmates of the suppressed convents were to receive stipends from the Government; but it was clear that the exigencies of the state, if no other reasons existed, would prevent the performance of this promise. Hitherto the king had remained passive, and sanctioned, certainly against his will, yet without any remonstrance, the various acts tending to destroy the little authority left to him; but when called upon for his assent to the suppression of the regular orders, he hesitated. At the end of a month his signature was reluctantly affixed, and the next day he departed for the Escorial."

Nor were tyrannical measures to enforce the authority of these popular despots wanting.

"Among the new measures was a decree awarding the penalty of *banishment for eight years* against any one endeavouring to dissuade the people from the observance of the constitution, and imprisonment for that period if an ecclesiastic."

This violent spoliation, however, excited at the time a general feeling of indignation.

"This precipitate, if not unjust, measure on the part of the Cortes, could not fail to rouse public indignation, and prepare the way for their own downfall. Besides the nature of the act, which general opinion regarded as a profanation, numbers of persons venerable in the eyes of the people were sent forth from their seclusion to beg their bread. The project, therefore, came before the public stamped with a double title to reprobation. It was pronounced a violent spoliation, as well as a revolting act of irreligion; and it appears strange that the patriotic senators of 1820, after clashing with the nobles and depriving so many public functionaries of their places, should have thus braved the anger of so powerful a body as the clergy.

"Having obtained possession of the political stage, they formed a confederacy to keep it exclusively to themselves; and if anything was wanting to complete their usurpation, it was to vote their own perpetuity, as the Long Parliament did in 1642, and by means of intimidation obtain the King's consent. They had an army at their disposal, and, as was done in the time of Charles I., some of the King's advisers were denounced as enemies of the state. The indignity offered to him previously to his abrupt departure for the Escorial, called into action all the elements of collision. The reduction of the monastic orders might be deemed advisable, nay necessary—so it had been thought before; but the Constitutionals having resolved upon that important measure, contrived to render it doubly dangerous by the manner and degree in which it was to be executed, and the time chosen for carrying it into effect. Religious establishments of this kind had been interwoven with the frame of society in Spain; they were considered as a principal appendage of the religion of the state, had been formed by the collective funds of private individuals, were associated with proud recollections of the past, and still held in veneration by all excepting the Liberal party. When, therefore, the people saw these establishments suppressed, the aged, who had spent their little all to procure an asylum for life, cast upon the world, and their substance bestowed upon persons who had set the worst possible example, by heading a military rebellion—their resentment passed all bounds."*

* "Quiroga, for example, had capitalised his pension, and thus obtained posses-

The first commencement of civil war, and of that atrocious system of massacre which has ever since disgraced the Peninsula, is then given by our author; and as murder was their grand weapon, so they were so dead to all sense of justice or shame, that they actually HAD ITS EMBLEM ENGRAVED ON THEIR SEALS. It was in the massacre of a man who had merely counselled "a free and national government."

"A paper of a mixed character made its appearance in the capital, tending to excite a counter-revolutionary movement. It preached—'No despotism and no anarchy—no *Camarilla* and no *factionous Cortes*; but a free and national government, founded on the ancient institutions.' The author being discovered, was thrown into prison, and his name ascertained to be Venuesa, formerly the curate of Tamajon, a small town in the province of Guadalajara, seven leagues from the capital, and lately one of the King's honorary chaplains. At a moment of public excitement, an incident of this kind was likely to produce much noise in a place where idlers and politicians abound. A surmise got abroad that the prisoner, in consequence of his high connexions, would be protected, and an evasion of justice was apprehended. This sufficed to rouse the ardent spirits frequenting the Puerta del Sol; and, in the true sense of the sovereignty of the people, they rushed in a crowd to the prison, forced open the door, entered the curate's cell, and with a blacksmith's hammer beat out his brains.*

"This murder was a signal for general agitation. The nobles, royalist officers, and ex-functionaries held up to contempt and derision the conduct of those who were unable to prevent the commission of such an atrocity. The ejected monks called the peasants to arms, by invoking the altar and the throne, or appealing to their own wrongs.

The large cities were, in a contrary sense, agitated by clubs and debating societies. At first these clubs had been the organs of Government; now they wished to dictate the means by which the commonwealth was to be saved. They publicly reproached the Ministers for their apathy, almost accusing them of being leagued with the King, whom they denounced as the chief plotter, and his palace as a ready receptacle for the *Serviles*."

And now we come to a most important subject; one to which we earnestly request the serious attention of our countrymen. It is the COMMENCEMENT of that war of extermination, which, as Mr Walton justly observes, has ever since raged in the Peninsula. Let us see with whom the responsibility of its introduction rests.

sion of the Granja de Cernadas, a valuable estate near Betanzos, in Galicia, belonging to the monastery of San Martin, at Santiago, of the Benedictine order, upon which he cut a large quantity of timber. Others had obtained estates, the property of the suppressed orders, in a similar manner."

* This deed was celebrated in songs, sung about the streets and in the guard-houses. In its commemoration, seals were worn with a crest representing a brawny and naked arm holding a hammer in the hand. *This seal became fashionable among the martillo or hammer faction*, and letters at that time, received in England, frequently had that impression upon them. The mob were also in the habit of expressing their displeasure at the conduct of an individual by beating hammers on the pavement under his windows; a pretty significant indication of the fate which awaited him if he sinned against the sovereign people.

" Catalonia was the cause of great disquietude to the Constitutionalists ; and in order to put down the Army of the Faith, and dislodge the regency from the Seo de Urgel, Mina was appointed early in September to command that principality, and entered on his duties at Lerida. As he himself states, he found ' the factious, to the number of 33,000, masters of almost all the country, in possession of various strong places and fortresses, protected by a great part of the towns, and, what was of still greater importance, they had a centre of union and government, viz. the titular *Regency of Spain*, established in Urgel ;' adding, ' these were the elements which presented themselves in Catalonia.' After noticing his preparations, he proceeds thus :—' I commenced operations on the 13th ; and a month and a half sufficed me to organise a small army, to raise the siege of Cervera, and take possession of Castell-follit. *I ordered the total destruction of this last-mentioned town*, as a punishment for the obstinacy of its rebellious inhabitants and defenders ; and by way of retorting the contempt with which they replied to the repeated messages I sent them, as well as for a warning to the rest, upon its ruins I ordered the following inscription to be placed : ' Here stood Castell-follit. *Towns ! take warning ; shelter not the enemies of your country.*'

" Thus spoke and acted the hero of Catalonia at the close of 1822 ! After enumerating a variety of other exploits, the captain-general comes to his attack upon the fortress of Urgel, where he experienced difficulties, and exultingly adds, ' that in the end constancy and heroism were victorious, and *six hundred profligates and robbers*, taken out of the prisons, who formed the greater part of the faction of the ringleader Romagosa, the defender of the fortress of Urgel, *expiated their crimes on the morning of the evacuation by their death upon the field.*' The men thus barbarously butchered were Royalists, the countrymen of this savage pacificator ; their only crime was that of having embraced a cause opposed to his own.

" As a proof of the spirit with which the Constitutionalists were then actuated, subjoined is an abstract from a proclamation, issued by Mina a few days before the Duke d'Angoulême entered Madrid :—' Art. 1. All persons who may have been members of a junta, society, or corporation opposed to the present system of government, as well as those who may have enlisted men or conspired against the constitution, *shall be irrevocably shot the instant they are taken.* Art. 2. Any town in which the inhabitants are called out against the Constitutional troops *shall be burned to ashes, and till one stone is not left upon another.*'—At the same time that the Governor of Catalonia published this proclamation, General Villacampa, at Seville, issued a similar edict, in which he declared that ' every one who by word or deed co-operates in the rebellion shall be *held to be a traitor, and punished as such* ; further, that any one knowing the situation of the factious, and concealing it, shall be held to be a traitor, and as such treated.' This edict closes with the following : ' The members of the municipalities of towns situated at the distance of six leagues from a Constitutional column, who may fail hourly to send in a report of the movements of the factious in their vicinity, shall pay out of their own property a fine of ten thousand reals ; and if any injury arise out of the omission, shall be judged in a military manner.'"

It was therefore not without reason, that, on the 20th November 1822, Count Nesselrode declared, in a public state paper, expressive of the feelings and resolutions of the Allied Powers regarding Spain—

" Anarchy appeared in the train of revolution—disorder in that of anarchy. Long years of tranquil possession ceased to be a sufficient title to

property ; the most sacred rights were disputed ; ruinous loans and contributions unceasingly renewed, destructive of public wealth and ruinous to private fortunes. Religion was despoiled of her patrimony, and the throne of popular respect. The royal dignity was outraged, the supreme authority having passed over to assemblies influenced by the blind passions of the multitude. To complete these calamities, on the 7th July blood was seen to flow in the palace, whilst civil war raged throughout the Peninsula."

The armed intervention to which these events in the Peninsula gave rise on the part of France in 1823, is well known ; and, when put to the proof, it speedily appeared on how hollow a foundation the whole fabric of revolutionary power in the Peninsula, with its whole adjuncts of church spoliation, democratic plunder, and Royalist massacre, really rested. The French troops marched without opposition from the Bidassoa to Cadiz ; hardly a shot was fired in defence of the constitution of 1812 ; even the armed intervention of a stranger, and the hateful presence of French soldiers, ever so obnoxious in Spain, could not rouse any resistance to the invaders. The recollection of the legions of Napoleon, and the terrible hardships of the Peninsular war, were forgotten in the more recent horrors of democratic ascendancy. But an event happened at Corunna which made a profound impression, and powerfully contributed to stamp on the future progress of the contest that savage character by which it is still unhappily distinguished.

"At Corunna, the most barbarous occurrence of the many which sullied the annals of the Constitutional contest took place. The French guns commanded the bay, in consequence of which a number of Royalists confined in a pontoon, rose upon their guards, cut the cables, and drifted out with the tide. Fearful that the other prisoners in the Castle of San Anton might equally escape, the military governor, on the 22d, ordered fifty-two of them to be brought to the town, and in the afternoon they were lodged in the prison ; but the civil authorities objecting to this step, in consequence of the crowded state of the prisons, as well as of the convents, the unhappy men were put into a small vessel and conveyed down the bay. After doubling the point on which the castle stands, and in front of the lighthouse, called the Tower of Hercules, *they were brought up in pairs from under the hatches, and bound together back to back, and thrown into the sea.* One of the victims, seeing the fate which awaited him, jumped into the water before his hands were tied, and endeavoured to escape by swimming ; but, being pursued by some of his executioners in a boat, they beat out his brains with their oars. The tide cast the bodies of these unfortunate creatures ashore, where they were the next morning found by the French soldiers on guard. General Bourke sent in a flag of truce complaining of this atrocious act ; but the monster in command, who had given orders for its perpetration, had, in the mean time, together with several other patriots, made off in a British steamer, and eventually found his way to England, where he *shared that hospitality*

which was experienced by the other refugees. On the 12th August, Corunna capitulated."

Nor were these atrocities confined to the north of the Peninsula. At Granada and Malaga, the same scenes were enacted with even deeper circumstances of horror.

"So insolent had the *Nationals* become at Granada, that Royalists and persons of moderate politics could no longer live in the place. Of these, a party of about fifteen resolved to withdraw into the country; but no sooner had they left the suburbs than they were denounced as having gone out to form a guerilla. The *Nationals* instantly pursued them, and at the distance of two leagues succeeded in capturing seven, the rest escaping. Among the party seized was Father Osuna, an old and venerable professor in the convent of San Antonio Abad; the rest, customhouse-guards and officers on half-pay. All, including the friar, were bound to the tails of horses, in this manner led into the city and paraded through the streets; after which, to add to the indignity, they were cast into the dungeons of what is called the lower or common prison, and herded with felons. Learning some days afterwards where the few who escaped had retired to, the eager *Nationals* again sallied forth, and succeeded in surprising five at the little town of Colomera, situated in the mountains, four leagues from Granada. Their hands being bound behind them, they were *brutally assassinated on a small ridge of hills overlooking the Bridge Cubillas*. So ferociously did the *Nationals* wreak their vengeance upon these victims of their licentious fury, that their mangled bodies could not be recognised by their friends, who the next day went out to bury them. Among the victims were two officers of the guards, the handsomest youths in the province.

"The seven confined in prison demanded an inquiry into the causes of their arrest and detention; but nothing appearing against them beyond their being reputed Royalists, which did not exactly warrant the penalty of death, the *Nationals* felt afraid that their victims would escape. In the afternoon of the 4th February they therefore got up a commotion in the usual way, and, heated with wine, groups passed along the streets, demanding the heads of Father Osuna and his companions. Reaching the front of the prison, they set up yells to be heard by the inmates, reiterating their demand, and endeavouring to force a passage through the gate, where a sergeant and a few soldiers were generally posted; but when the uproar commenced, General Villacampa, the governor, doubled the guard, and stationed a lieutenant there. The mob being disappointed, went away.

"In the evening the lieutenant was changed, and an officer in the confidence of the *Nationals* was placed at the prison-gate. The commotion was now renewed; and the leaders of the mob assembling at a noted coffeehouse in the Plaza Nueva, their usual resort, the death of the prisoners was at once decreed. Sure of their game, the brave *Nationals* hurried off to the prison, where they were received with a volley of musketry, pointed so high that the balls struck midway up the wall of the cathedral, fronting the prison-gate, where the marks are still seen. This saved appearances, and the commanding-officer thought his responsibility sufficiently covered. The bloodthirsty mob now rushed into the prison, the leaders with their faces blackened and their persons disguised. *Five inmates in separate cells were soon laid prostrate upon the ground, covered with stabs*. One of them, posted in a corner, manfully defended himself with a pillow, which dropped from his hands after they had literally been *cut to pieces*.

"Father Osuna was now led forth,—as the old man supposed, that his life might be saved; but no sooner had he gone fifteen paces beyond the prison-gate, and turned the corner of a narrow street, than he received a

sabre-cut on the top of his bald head. He lifted up his hand to the streaming wound, and at the same moment a blow knocked him against the wall, upon which the bloody imprint of his hand was left as he endeavoured to save himself from falling. Dropping to the ground, he was beaten with sticks and cut with knives. Supposing him dead, the mob dispersed; when the gaoler, hearing his moans, conveyed him back to the prison, where his wounds were dressed. The next day, the heroic *Nationals*, hearing that Father Osuna still survived, flew to the prison; when one of them, after insulting and upbraiding him for his Royalist principles, put a pistol to his right ear, and *blew his brains upon the opposite wall*, where the bloody traces were seen till within the two last years, and till the interior of the prison was repaired. The seventh victim, who had been conveyed to the upper prison, was murdered under similar circumstances. These scenes ended in a drunken frolic; and if they occurred in 1823, can any one be astonished that they should now be repeated?"

Our heart sickens at these atrocities; but the exhibition of them at this crisis is an indispensable duty on the part of every lover of truth and justice. It is now the game of the English Liberals to withdraw all sympathy from Don Carlos and his heroic followers, by constantly representing him as a bloodthirsty tyrant, a monster unfit to live, with whom the infamous system of giving no quarter originated. The documents and historical facts now quoted may show how totally unfounded is the assertion. Here we have the Liberals of Spain,—the humane, philanthropic revolutionists of the Peninsula, committing these atrocities when at the helm of affairs, not only before the Royalists, but *ten years before the death of Ferdinand*, and when Don Carlos was still living secluded in private life. These massacres were commenced by the Liberals when in possession of the government, the fortresses, the treasury, the army. When such frightful deeds of blood stained their first successes over their helpless Royalist antagonists, it is not surprising that a profound feeling of indignation was roused through the whole Peninsula, which has rendered it the most difficult of tasks to moderate the sanguinary character of the conflict in subsequent times. Hitherto, be it observed, the massacres had been all on one side; not one act of retaliation had taken place on the part of their opponents.

With truth it may be said, that the revolutionary party are ever the same; they learn nothing, they forget nothing. Mr Walton thus sums up, in a few words, the series of crimes and follies which had thus twice precipitated the democrats of the Peninsula from the possession of absolute authority:—

“The follies and illegalities committed by the Cortes from the moment of their assembling at Cadiz, may be easily traced in the pages of this narrative; and yet the same follies and illegalities were at Madrid and Cadiz repeated in 1820, 21, 22, and 23. The Cortes first became the legislators of the land by means of a flagrant act of usurpation, which, under the pretence of being legally constituted, they sustained at all hazards; the second time they rose into power by the aid of a military mutiny, and were not prudent enough to steer clear of the very shoals upon which they had previously been stranded. The first time, they had a fair opportunity of judging the evils of precipitate and ill-considered legislation: they then beheld events pregnant with lessons of political wisdom, and still had not the sense or the courage to correct old mistakes when chance again placed the helm of state within their grasp. On both occasions they fell from the same causes. Public indignation hurled them from their seats in 1814; and in 1823 they were overpowered, not by the arms of France, but by the displeasure of their own countrymen, disgusted and wearied out with the turmoils in which they had been kept, as well as by the many atrocities which they had witnessed. Their army of 96,750 men was gradually frittered away; and while in fortified towns they were vainly denouncing vengeance, in the interior the lips of thousands greeted the Duke d'Angoulême, and welcomed him as the liberator of their king and country.”

The situation of Ferdinand VII., when thus a second time restored to his throne, was surrounded with difficulties. Not only had the most furious passions been awakened in the Royalists by the savage and uncalled-for massacres of their opponents, but the public interests in every department had suffered to a degree hardly conceivable in so short a period as that of the revolutionary domination.

“The new ministers,” says Walton, “who were the best men the country could produce, found everything unhinged and in disorder. The misfortunes of which the Cadiz code was so lamentable a memorial, daily showed themselves in some new shape. The more the state of the country was inquired into, the more flagrant the errors, if not the guilt, of the fallen party appeared. The reports from the provinces were appalling—the treasury empty, and foreign credit destroyed. On isolated points the shades of opinion might have varied; but in the condemnation of the acts of the Liberals, the public voice was unanimous. Then only was ascertained in its full extent the galling nature of their yoke.”

An amnesty was immediately published by the King. The exceptions were numerous, amounting to nearly two thousand persons; but “they were chiefly assassins—men whom no amnesty could reach.” The means of being reinstated in favour were amply afforded to those who were not actually stained with blood; and great numbers were immediately reinstated in their employments. The rest, for the most part, withdrew to France and England, where they lived for many years, maintained by public or private charity, and objects of mistaken interest to the English people, who believed that the selfish projects of aggrandise-

ment from which they had been dashed were those of freedom and public happiness.

The repeated and ludicrous attempts which the Spanish Revolutionists made to regain their footing in the Peninsula from 1823 to 1830, and the instant and total failure of them all, demonstrated in the clearest manner the slender hold they had of the public mind, and the strong sense of the horrors of revolutionary sway which the experience of their government had generally produced.

Doubtless the government of the Royalists during the period of their ascendancy, from 1824 to the death of Ferdinand in 1833, was not perfect. The Ministers of the King must have been more than human if, in a country in which such a revolutionary party had obtained for so ever short a time an ascendancy, they could at once have closed the fountains of evil.

"More," says Mr Walton, "perhaps might have been done—many abuses were left untouched; still commerce and agriculture continued in a progressive state of improvement. The public burdens had also greatly diminished. Under the administration of the Cortes, the general taxes levied were equal to a hundred millions of reals, afterwards they were reduced to forty, and the provincial rents from two hundred and ninety-five millions lowered to a hundred and thirty. The best test is perhaps that of the finances; an idea of which may be formed from the subjoined approximate statements, founded upon correct data.

The foreign debt created by the Cortes from September 1820 to October 1823,	£19,000,000
Ditto by the king, from October 1823 to September 1830,	5,000,000
Foreign debt cancelled by the Cortes,	None!
Ditto by the king,	1,000,000
Interest paid on domestic debt by the Cortes,	None!
Since the restoration,	Paid regularly.
Public expenditure under the Cortes,	6,648,133
Ditto since the restoration,	4,197,772"

Thus it appears that the Liberal Government, during their short reign, from October 1820 to October 1823, that is, in *two years*, had contracted, in spite of all the produce of the confiscated church lands, NINETEEN MILLIONS STERLING of debt; and that, in the next *seven*, the King's Government had only contracted FIVE: that the Cortes paid *no interest* on the national debt, and the King paid it regularly. Finally, that the annual expenditure of the Cortes was a half greater, besides their enormous loans, than that of the King. So much for the realisation of the

blessings of cheap and good government by the Spanish Revolutionists !

But the time was now approaching when the cast-down and despairing Democrats of Spain were again to be elevated to supreme power, and, by the aid of Liberal governments in France and England, a civil war was to be lighted up in the Peninsula, unexampled in modern times for constancy and courage on the one side, and cruelty and incapacity on the other.

Ferdinand VII., in his latter years, had married a fourth wife, by whom he had no son, but one daughter. By the Spanish law, which, in this particular, is an adoption, under certain modifications, of the famous Salic law, females were excluded from the succession to the throne ; and this order of succession to the Spanish crown had been guaranteed by all the powers of Europe, and especially England, by the treaty of Utrecht. It had regulated the succession to the throne for a hundred and thirty years. Ferdinand, however, was declining both in years and mental vigour. The Queen was naturally desirous of securing the succession to her own offspring, and she was a woman of capacity and intrigue well fitted for such an enterprise. Upon this state of matters, the Liberals immediately fixed all their hopes, and artfully succeeded, by implicating the King and Queen in an alteration of the order of succession in favour of their daughter, at once in dividing the Royalist party, distracted between the pretensions of the royal competitors, in concealing their own selfish projects of aggrandisement under a pretended zeal for the maintenance of the new order of descent, and in engrafting the interest of a disputed succession on the native deformity of a merely sordid revolutionary movement.

The magnitude and importance of the vast change on which the Liberal party had now adventured is thus ably stated by Mr Walton :—

“ The law which excluded females when there was male issue was precise and peremptory. It had been enacted with the due concurrence of the Cortes, and formed part of a general settlement of the peace of Europe, guaranteed by England and France. This law was besides recorded in the statute-book, and for one hundred and twenty years had been held as the only rule of succession. Its abrogation, therefore, was a matter of the most serious consideration, affecting not only the prospective claims of the king's brother, strengthened as they were by his popularity and the Royalist

interest which he represented, but also those of other members of the Bourbon family who came after him in the line of succession. The undertaking was indeed arduous and awful, in consequence of the extensive changes which it was likely to introduce.

"It was not a matter of mere family aggrandisement upon which the queen had set her heart. The proposed measure arose out of no wish to revive a principle successfully maintained in former times. It was part of a system of which there was a further action in reserve. More and deeper mischief was contemplated than that of depriving one branch of its hereditary rights. *The alteration in the established rule was intended as a seal to a revolution.* This was the light in which Ferdinand himself viewed the proposal when first made to him; and although his scruples gradually gave way when he found himself beset by the creatures and puppets of the queen, there was no other period of his life in which his resolution on this point could have been shaken. Even then the whole scheme would have failed, if a clever and fascinating woman had not been the principal agent. Her great aim was to raise up a barrier between the Infante Don Carlos and the throne, and the king's jealousy of his brother's popularity was the chord touched with most effect. The queen also knew that this feeling chiefly led to her own marriage, and it was agreed that the most propitious moment for the development of the plan would be the termination of the rejoicings to which the announcement of her pregnancy had given rise."

The way in which this extraordinary change in the Constitution was introduced is thus detailed:—

"In the *Gazette* of the 6th April 1830, to the astonishment of every one, an edict, dated March 29th, appeared with the following remarkable heading:—'Pragmatic Sanction, having the force of law, decreed by King Charles IV. on the petition of the Cortes for 1789, and ordered to be published by his reigning majesty for the *perpetual* observance of law 2, title 15, partida 2, establishing the regular succession to the crown of Spain;' alleged to have been in force for seven hundred years.

"The publication was also carried into effect with the usual solemnities. The rain fell in torrents; nevertheless the magistrates and heralds proceeded to do their duty by reading the decree aloud and posting it up in the public places. The streets of Madrid were thronged with an anxious and inquiring multitude, who did not hesitate, in no measured terms, to express their surprise and disgust at this glaring imposture. Nobody could understand how the reigning sovereign, of his own will and accord, could venture to sanction a law alleged to have been passed by his father forty-one years before, and which, even if it had then been perfected, (and the reverse was the case,) could not be held valid, for obvious reasons."

It is not our intention to follow Mr Walton through his able argument against the legality of the change thus unceremoniously introduced *of the King's own authority*, without any recourse whatever to a Cortes or any other national authority. It was not even attempted to get any such authority; but it was pretended that it had been granted when the alteration on the law of succession had been made by Charles IV. in 1789. The absurdity of supposing that so important a matter as the descent of the Crown could be legally altered by a pretended act of a

king on the petition of the Cortes, without *its even being known*, or ever heard of, for forty years after its alleged enactment, is too obvious to require illustration. Add to this, that the pretended alteration by Charles IV. has *never yet been produced*, or seen by any one; and that the fact of its existence rests on the assertion of a bedridden doting King in favour of his own daughter. And even if such a deed did exist, it would, by the fundamental laws of Spain, be utterly null in a question with Don Carlos, or the princes born before its promulgation, as not having been published to the magistrates of the provinces in the way required by the Constitution. The more defective the title of the Queen to the crown, however, the better for the Liberals: they had now a *revolutionary dynasty* implicated in their struggle for supreme power.

Upon the publication of this decree, Don Carlos, the next male in succession, and directly struck at by the ordinance, was solicited by the chief nobles of Spain instantly to assume the government.

"Several grandees," says Mr Walton, "now leagued with the opposite party, together with generals and other influential persons, urged the Infante Don Carlos to come forward and accept the crown, not only as his right, but also as the only means of preserving public tranquillity. The conscientious prince rejected their offer, though well aware of the extent of his popularity in every part of the kingdom; alleging that so long as the king lived, *he would never do an act derogatory to his character, either as a brother or a subject*. He was then invited to take the regency upon himself, which, it was argued, could be done without any violation of his principles, on the plea of the king's illness, and to rescue the country from a dreadful crisis; but again the prince declined to interfere, observing, that his rights and those of his family were clear and still well protected; protesting that he would not take any step that might hereafter render his conduct liable to misrepresentation. Had the prince then lifted up his hand, the regency, and eventually the crown, would have been his own: Spain would have been saved from the horrors of a long and sanguinary civil war. But where is the man who does not respect the prince's motives of action—who does not admire the disinterestedness with which he refused a sceptre already within his grasp?"

The Cortes never was assembled to *deliberate* on the alteration of the order of succession, or consent to it; but a limited number of creatures of the court (seventy-six in number) were convoked in June 20, 1833, to *swear allegiance* to the King's daughter, as a princess whose title to the throne was unquestionable. A protest was on that occasion taken by the Neapolitan and Sardinian ambassadors against the change, on grounds apparently unanswer-

able.* And even all the efforts and influence of the Court could not give a national character to the ceremony, or dispel the gloomy presentiments with which even the humblest of the spectators were inspired.

“Seventy-six popular delegates had been summoned,” says Walton, “to take part in a dumb show, at a moment when two of the most important questions which ever presented themselves to public consideration agitated the country. The legality of the alteration in the law of succession, and the appointment of a regent in case of the king’s death, were points which, everybody thought, ought to have been submitted to the Cortes, if such was the character of the meeting just dissolved. The world had been ostentatiously informed that, when those of 1789 met for the purpose of acknowledging the Prince of Asturias, the question of succession was introduced, and this circumstance, after the lapse of nearly half a century, made a plea for the establishment of a new rule: why, then, all this silence now, in defiance of public opinion? The queen, at the moment, was supreme, and her rival a voluntary exile in a foreign land. Every precaution had also been adopted to secure the return of deputies, if not favourable to her views, at least belonging to the movement party; and the capital was besides crowded with troops. And yet the queen and her advisers *had not the courage to trust the decision of two plain questions to a meeting of their own calling*; fearful that among its members some lurking Royalist might be found to expose their injustice, and argue the illegality of their acts. Any sympathies then excited in favour of the Infante, might have been ruinous to a cause only half consolidated. It therefore became necessary to carry on the delusion, by again resorting to sophistry, tergiversation, and calumny.”

Meanwhile, however, every effort was made to fill all offices of trust in the army and civil department with Liberals of known resolution and determined character, who then found themselves, to their infinite joy, in consequence of the disputed succession they had contrived to get up to the throne, reinstated a *third time* in the possession of that authority from which they had been twice chased by the experienced evils of their sway, and the general indignation of the people. In a few months their preparations were

* “The law of 1713 was enacted by the chief of a new dynasty, with all the formalities that were requisite and indispensable to its validity, and at a time when a concurrence of extraordinary and distressing circumstances justified the propriety of a new law of succession; that it is a law consecrated by more than a century of uninterrupted existence; that it was the necessary consequence of the stipulations which secured the throne of Spain to the grandson of Louis XIV., and to his male descendants, and that the weighty reasons in which it originated continue to subsist.

“We have further considered, that an order of succession established as this was, by the consent and under the guarantee of the principal powers of Europe, and recognised successively in various treaties concluded with those powers, has become obligatory and unalterable, and has transmitted to all the descendents of Philip V. rights which, as they were obtained by the sacrifice of other rights, they cannot relinquish without material injury to themselves, and without failing in the consideration due to the illustrious head and founder of their dynasty.”

complete. Such had been their activity, that all the offices in the state—all the fortresses in the country—all the commands in the army, were in their hands. At the same time Don Carlos was banished ; his adherents discouraged ; his cause to all appearance desperate. Suddenly reinforced through the intrigues of the Queen for her daughter, by the whole weight of Government, the Revolutionists had completely regained their ascendant. Yet, even in these circumstances, such was their unpopularity in consequence of the numberless corrupt and atrocious acts of which they had been guilty, that all these preparations would have been unavailing to force an unpopular and revolutionary change of government on the country, had it not been for the instant and powerful support which the Liberals in Spain received on the death of Ferdinand from the democratic governments of France and England.

“Ferdinand died,” says Walton, “on 29th September 1833. The account of his decease was transmitted to Paris by telegraph, and the next day a courier departed with orders to M. de Rayneval to declare that the French government was disposed to acknowledge the young princess as soon as the official notification of the demise of the crown arrived. This step had doubtless been agreed upon with the British Government, in anticipation of an event long expected ; and to this joint determination, and the immediate announcement of it in the *Madrid Gazette*, it was that the Queen chiefly owed the ascendancy which she gained in the first period of her regency. At that time the eyes of all Spain were upon England and France. They, as it were, held the balance in their own hands ; for the numerous and influential Spaniards, who were disposed to assert the rights of the lawful heir, intimidated by the extensive preparations of the Government, and discouraged by the absence of their natural leader, held back from any attempt against the usurped power of the regent, through fear that for the moment opposition would be fruitless. Many colonels of regiments intrusted with command—even some Liberals of the old school, sensible that the country was on the eve of a civil war, hesitated, and only joined the Queen’s cause when they saw it pompously proclaimed that England and France had declared in her favour, and thrown their powerful aid into her scale.

“The British and French Governments may be said to have then assumed the right to *dictate to Spain who should reign over her* ; and, as if it was not enough to have appointed to the throne, to have taken upon themselves to name a regent ; for it is impossible to believe that the governments of the two countries which most contributed to the settlement effected by Philip V. were really convinced of the legality of the last measure of Ferdinand VII. to annul that settlement ; or that, with their boasted attachment to the principles of a limited monarchy, they could be sincere in professing a belief that the mere testamentary provision of an uxorious and enfeebled king could disinherit the rightful heir to the throne, and subvert the fundamental laws of his country.”

The result of this possession of the treasury, the seat of Government, the army, with their powerful foreign support,

is well known. The Queen was proclaimed throughout the kingdom ; and although partial risings in favour of Don Carlos took place in almost every province, yet as that prince was in exile, and his adherents unarmed and scattered, they were without difficulty suppressed by the military force, 100,000 strong, now at the disposal of the Liberals. But, as Mr Walton justly observes—

“The Spaniards in the end will redress their own wrongs. They will not submit to insult and proscription ; the popular thunder will never cease to roll until the confederacy formed between the Spanish Liberals and their foreign allies is dissolved for ever. Already, indeed, are the oppressors of 1823 and 1833 treading on a terrible volcano, surrounded by every sign of past ravage and impending explosion. Neither the Queen, nor the party by which she is upheld, has any hold upon the confidence or affections of the Spanish people ; the views of the one, in endeavouring to secure the throne to her daughter by an outrage upon her late husband’s memory, are too unjust and too revolting to prosper ; whilst the object of the others, in seizing upon power for a third time, is as apparent now as it was before. Were the Liberals really friends of constitutional order—known for their adherence to settled systems of reform—disposed to admit changes founded upon principles of tried merit—taught by experience and adversity to prefer plans of a practical character and easy results, to dangerous theories and extravagant notions—in a word, were they prepared to sacrifice their party prejudices to the general wants and wishes of the country, they might still have repaired their former errors, and spared the effusion of blood.

“So far, their cry for freedom has only been another name for social disorganisation ; their return to power *the commencement of an uncontrolled career of outrage and murder*. Their official existence seems to depend on the repetition of previous follies and crimes. Place and pelf in their opinion cannot be secured unless the revolution is completed by the *utter extermination of the Royalists* : they equally disregard the laws and the public voice. The Spaniards have always evinced a scrupulous respect for ancient forms, as well as an aversion to changes in their institutions ; and now they are told that they must have nothing that does not bear a modern stamp. They have been distinguished beyond other nations by a jealous love of their country and a horror of foreign dictation ; but they are now informed that they must be satisfied with such rulers, and such a form of government as the *Liberals of London and Paris may be graciously pleased to bestow on them*. In one breath they are branded as ignorant and prejudiced bigots, and in the next called upon to admit changes of a refined kind long before society is in a state to receive them.”

The civil war soon after commenced in Navarre ; and we again pray the particular attention of our readers to the mingled perfidy and cruelty by which, *from the very first*, it was distinguished on the part of the Queen’s forces : a cruelty so atrocious, and *uniformly adhered to*, as to have rendered altogether unavoidable the frightful reprisals which have ever since prevailed in the Peninsula. Lorenzo was the Christino general in Navarre—Santos Ladron the popular leader. The former, fearful of the issue of the contest,

privately conveyed a message to Don Santos, signifying his wish to have a conference to prevent the effusion of blood.

"This message was cordially received, and in an unguarded moment Don Santos agreed to meet his adversary, judging by this step that he was promoting the interests of humanity and the advancement of the cause which he had so fervently embraced. Without a written engagement or previous formality, a private meeting was agreed upon, and the two generals, with their respective staffs and a few attendants, proceeded to the appointed spot, a short distance beyond Los Arcos.

"Santos Ladron endeavoured to persuade Lorenzo that he was wrong in supporting the Queen's cause; and in the most feeling manner pointed out the calamities in which the country was about to be involved, it being evident that the laws and the great majority of the people were in favour of Charles V. He alluded to the unfortunate contest of 1820, which, he said, was about to be renewed. He appealed to Lorenzo's patriotism and religion, and, as one older in rank and more experienced, implored him to spare the effusion of blood. Finding that he could make no impression upon the Queen's representative, Santos Ladron reined his horse and was about to withdraw, when Lorenzo's people fired upon him. His horse fell, and as he was extricating himself from his stirrup, the flaps of his frock-coat flew open, and underneath discovered the general's sash. The sight of the insignia of his rank inflamed the rapacity of the Christinos, and they rushed upon the dismounted chieftain, eager to gain so valuable a prize and the corresponding reward. Santos Ladron, who had been already wounded by the treacherous fire of the Christinos, was conveyed to Pamplona, and, without being admitted to a hearing, was, with thirty-two of his companions, subjected to the mockery of a court-martial and condemned to death. In vain the provincial deputation and the Bishop of Pamplona implored the viceroy and the military governor to suspend the execution till the matter could be referred to Madrid; all intercession was vain. It was answered that the formalities of a court-martial had been fully observed, and it was now impossible to alter the sentence. In reality, the authorities were eager to recommend themselves to the Madrid government by executing with precipitate activity the orders of a remorseless policy, and they were well aware that nothing could be more *distasteful to their employers than any hesitation in discharging the bloody service* that was required at their hands. On the 15th of October *the wounded general, with his thirty-two companions, was led into the ditch of the fortress, and there privately shot.*"

The effect of this atrocity may be easily conceived.

"The perfidious massacre of thirty-three persons at once proclaimed to Spain and Europe the faithless and remorseless character of the government that sanctioned and rewarded the horrid deed; as a measure of intimidation it utterly failed; nay, rather fanned the flame which it was intended to extinguish. The very night after the execution, five hundred persons, mostly youths of the best families in Pamplona, quitted the place, and joined the Carlists of Roncesvalles. The next day Colonel Benito Eraso, who had raised the valley of Roncesvalles, issued a proclamation to the inhabitants, and an address to the soldiers. In the former, after begging those whom he addressed not to be discouraged by the misfortune of Santos Ladron, he added, 'No vengeance! oblivion of the past, and a religious observance of the decree of amnesty! Let order, union, and valour be your motto, and triumph is certain.' A noble contrast to the barbarous atrocities which his enemies had not only the heart to perpetrate, but the shamelessness to avow."

Saarsfield, another of the Queen's generals, though of a more mild and pacific character, was nevertheless constrained, by his orders from Madrid, to begin the war with the same system of reckless butchery.

"It was well known," says Walton, "that he did not belong to the revolutionary school; and the very names of many of those who, fresh from the exile to which Ferdinand had consigned them, were now employed to second his own operations, must have enabled him, long before he crossed the Ebro, to judge of the probable course of impending changes, and have filled him with mingled feelings of discontent and apprehension. He was, however, carried away by events; and the ease with which his advantages were gained, did not restrain his troops from marking their progress by acts of violence, and the wanton effusion of blood. His orders, doubtless, were severe, and too peremptory to be trifled with; while the more active and ambitious of his officers must have been allured by the rewards bestowed on the bloody deed of Lorenzo, to imitate his barbarous example, and to adapt their mode of warfare to the taste prevailing in the capital. *Every Carlist chieftain taken in arms was accordingly shot without mercy*; the same severity was extended to the *less responsible peasantry*, and the most unsparing efforts were made to extinguish the hopes of Charles V. in the blood of every class of his adherents; a merciless and at the same time impolitic rigour, by which fuel was added to a half-extinguished flame, and the discontent of a bold and warlike population converted into the most bitter and desperate hostility."

These inhuman massacres, however, did not intimidate the Carlists; but wherever they rose in arms, the same execrable system of murder was pursued by the Queen's generals.

"The Carlists," says our author, "one and all, felt that faith had not been kept with them; that the proclamations of the Queen's officers were only intended to entrap the unwary, and that their real aim was extermination.

"The cries of fresh victims constantly resounded in their ears, and they continued to shudder at the remembrance of the butcheries which they had already witnessed. Brigadier Tina, who had been captured and his band dispersed, was on the 26th November shot near Alcaniz. At Calatayud *twenty-one Carlists* had previously *met with the same fate*, and among them two ecclesiastics; a fact sufficient to show the brutalising effects of the new system. Morella was entered on the 13th December, after a close investment by General Butron, the governor of Tortosa; but the Carlist garrison escaped, and were afterwards overtaken at Calanda, near Alcaniz, when their commander, Baron Herves, his wife and three children, fell into the hands of the Queen's troops. Agreeably to an order of the day, published by Viceroy Espeleta, the commander of the Royalist volunteers of Torrelblanca, D. Cristoval Fuste, and D. Pedro Torre, were shot at Zaragoza, in the morning of the 23d December; and on the 27th, Baron Herves, and D. Vicente Gil, commander of the Royalist volunteers, shared the same fate. At Vitoria, the son of a rich merchant, for whose ransom five thousand dollars were offered, was also shot by the orders of Valdes, at a moment when a courier from Madrid could not pass without a large escort."

And now the Queen's Government, emboldened by the success with which they had hitherto butchered and massacred whoever appeared in arms against them, resolved on a still more sweeping and unjustifiable act of democratic

despotism. This was the *destruction of the liberties and rights of the whole Basque provinces*, and the extinction of the freedom which had prevailed in the mountains of Navarre and Biscay for six hundred years. It is unnecessary to say what these privileges were. All the world knows that these provinces were in truth a free constitutional monarchy, inserted into the despotic realm of Spain ; that their popular rights were more extensive than those of England under the Reform Bill ; that they exceeded even the far-famed democratic privileges of the Swiss Cantons. For that very reason they were odious to the democratic despots at Madrid, who could tolerate no restraint whatever on *their* OWN authority, and least of all from free-born mountaineers, who had inherited their privileges from their fathers, and not derived them from their usurpation. Like their predecessors in the French Directory toward the Swiss Cantons, they had accordingly from the very first devoted these liberties to destruction, and they seized the first opportunity of success to carry their tyrannical determination into execution.

“ As soon,” says Walton, “ as the Queen’s military commanders had established their authority, *they declared the Basque fueros provisionally suspended*. For some time past the Madrid Government had wished to place these provinces under the Castilian law, by carrying the line of customs to their extreme frontiers, and the present opportunity was thought favourable. On the 3d December Castanos issued a proclamation from his headquarters at Tolosa, of which the following are the principal clauses:—‘ If, after a lapse of eight days, arms are found in any house, the master shall be subject to a fine and other penalties ; and should he have no means of payment, condemned to two years’ hard labour at the hulks : any individual concealing ammunition, money, or other effects belonging to an insurgent, *shall be shot* : the house of any person who may have fired upon the Queen’s troops shall be burnt : every peasant forming one of an assemblage of less than fifty men, and taken in arms at a quarter of a league from the high-road, shall be *considered as a brigand and shot* : any one intercepting a Government courier *shall be shot* : every village that shall, without opposition, suffer the insurgents to obtain recruits, shall be punished with a heavy contribution : all the property of absentees shall be confiscated : every peasant refusing to convey information from the municipalities to headquarters shall be put in irons, and condemned to two years’ imprisonment, or hard labour, in the fortress of St Sebastian : all women who, by word or deed, favour the rebellion, shall be closely confined : a court-martial shall be formed to take cognizance of all causes brought before them, and every moveable column shall have with it one member of this court for the purpose of carrying into effect the provisions of this proclamation.’

“ The brutal edict was read with horror and disgust. Such of the natives as had embraced the Queen’s cause now bitterly repented of their error when they saw their privileges trampled under foot by a military despot, and found themselves obliged to receive into their houses, and furnish with every necessary, the soldiers who protected him in his outrageous exercise of illegal power. The mere mention of their *fueros* being suspended, produced a

magical effect, and the Basques now considered their cause more than ever sanctified. Many who before had remained neutral flew to arms, and the war-cry resounded along the mountain ranges. Surrounded by rocks and precipices, the Basque patriots assembled to consider their prospects, and devise revenge for their wrongs. The hardy peasantry resolved to suffer the last extremities of war rather than submit to the yoke with which they were threatened. They required no oath of secrecy, no pledges for each other's fidelity. They called to mind the heroic efforts of their ancestors to resist oppression; and holding up the printed paper circulated among them, in scorn and abhorrence, they swore to defend their freedom, and mutually bound each other, as the sword was already unsheathed, never to return it to the scabbard till their *fueros* were acknowledged and secured."

Human cruelty, it might have been thought, could hardly have gone beyond the atrocities already committed by the revolutionary generals; but they were exceeded by that perpetrated in the endeavour to crush this gallant effort of the Basque peasants to rescue from destruction Biscayan freedom.

"Zavala (a Biscay chief) having seized five noted Christinos, took them to his headquarters at Gantegui de Arteaga, a small town on the east of the river Mundaca, where he treated them with respect. In retaliation, the enemy sent a detachment of six hundred men from Bilbao to Murguia, to seize his family; after which the same corps advanced upon his position *with his children placed in their foremost rank*. Zavala was struck with horror at this revolting expedient, and hesitated between his duty as a soldier and paternal tenderness. If an engagement ensued, his own children would inevitably fall before their father's musketry. In this dreadful dilemma, and hoping still to defeat the enemy without submitting to the cruel necessity of destroying the dearest portion of himself, Zavala withdrew to Guernica. Here he was attacked the next day by the same troops, who again advanced with his children in front of their column. The same torture awaited the distracted parent. He placed his troops in an advantageous position, and the fire commenced under the tree of Guernica, that glorious sign of proud recollections to the sons of Biscay—the tree under which they swear fidelity to their liege lord, and where he binds himself in turn to keep their privileges inviolate. Victory crowned the efforts of the Biscayan Royalists, and scarcely more than a third of the Queen's troops escaped. The devoted victims of the atrocious assailants were saved, and restored to the arms of an agonised father."

The extent to which these early massacres by the revolutionists was carried, was very great.

"It was about this time estimated," says our author, "that not less than *twelve hundred persons had been put to the sword, or executed, in the Basque provinces and Navarre* alone, besides the many victims sacrificed in other parts of the kingdom. For three months the Queen's agents had been playing a deceitful and desperate game. They respected no laws, and even broke the promises contained in their own proclamations. Hence numbers who had laid down their arms, and returned to their homes, again banded together, filled with the most exasperated and vindictive feelings; and if in this state of mind they resorted to acts of retaliation, those whose previous cruelties provoked such severities are justly answerable for the excesses of the Carlists as well as for their own. The horrible atrocities of the Queen's

partisans gave the contest a deadly and ferocious character; and, as if the former severities had not been sufficient, fuel was added to the flame by a decree issued by the Queen-regent, and bearing date the 21st of January, in which it was ordered, that all privates, belonging to the several factions, who might not have been shot, should be employed in the condemned regiments of Ceuta, Cuba, Porto Rico, and the Philippine Islands, at the same time that the officers were to be punished with the utmost severity of the law."

Nay, so resolute were the revolutionists in carrying on the war on no other principle than that of indiscriminate massacre, that it was repeatedly announced in official proclamations as the rule of war by the Queen's generals.

"On the 5th August 1834, Rodil issued a proclamation, in which he said, 'that after employing all possible means of clemency, he is convinced that severe chastisement alone can put an end to the rebel faction; wherefore he decrees, 1st, That *every one found in the ranks of the rebels shall be shot as soon as taken*; 2d, Those who supply arms, favour their attempts, or obey their summons, *shall be equally shot*,' &c. This edict is dated Pamplona, and the strictest orders were circulated to carry it into full effect."

All attempts on the part of the Carlists to establish a more humane system of warfare were in vain. One in particular deserves to be mentioned. In one of Zumalacarregui's victories, a Spanish nobleman of high rank was made prisoner.

"On the first leisure moment, Zumalacarregui examined his prisoners, and more especially the count. The Carlist chieftain was pleased with his manly behaviour; and, after several inquiries as to the state of affairs at Madrid, promised to propose an exchange of prisoners, in which the count's rank was to be waived. In the meanwhile the count was invited to Zumalacarregui's table, and treated with every consideration. A few days afterwards, whilst at dinner, Rodil's answer to the proposed cartel arrived, in which he stated that the prisoners for whom it was wished to make an exchange *had been already shot*. 'Here, count,' said the Carlist leader, 'take the letter of your Queen's commander: read it yourself, and then judge the situation in which I am placed.'

"The unfortunate count turned pale, and with a start pushed his plate almost to the middle of the table. The repast was at once at an end. After a pause, during which a dead silence prevailed, Zumalacarregui, addressing the weeping count, added, 'I wished to spare you, and such also I know would be my sovereign's wish; but with such enemies forbearance is impossible. From the first I looked upon you as a deluded youth, of an ardent mind, and I should have rejoiced in being the instrument of Royal mercy; but Rodil's outrages are beyond endurance: they must and shall be checked. Were I considerate towards you, our enemies, as they have done before, would attribute my conduct to weakness. This triumph they shall not obtain. *The widows' weeds worn in these provinces will tell you the state of the war better than all you heard in Madrid.*'"

Not content with the wholesale murders thus carried into execution on women and children of the adverse party, the democrats in the Spanish great towns resolved to take the

work of the butcher into their own hands, and enjoy in their own persons the exquisite pleasure of putting to death their captive enemies. At Zaragosa, thirteen monks were murdered; at Cordova, several convents burnt; at Valencia, the mob were only appeased by the sacrifice of six Carlists, who were massacred in cold blood. At Barcelona, the atrocities were still more frightful.

“On the afternoon of the 25th July 1835, a mob, arrayed in various bands, each headed by a leader in disguise, paraded the streets with cries of ‘Away to the convents!’ and ‘Death to the friars!’ and forthwith proceeded from words to deeds. Six convents (namely, those of the Augustins, of the Trinitarians, of the two orders of Carmelites, of the Minims, and of the Dominicans) were blazing at once, and soon were reduced to heaps of smoking ruins; while *eighty of their unfortunate inmates perished*, some burned in the buildings, others poniarded, and others again beaten to death with clubs and stones. Some escaped through the exertions of the artillery corps, and a few by mingling in disguise with the crowd. Three hundred friars and clergymen took refuge in the castle of Monjuich, and as many more in the citadel and fort Atarzanas. The military, meanwhile, paraded the streets, but *remained perfectly passive*, having received orders not to fire on the populace. Llauder, the captain-general, fled into France, and left the city virtually in the power of the rabble.”

Subsequently the savage temper of the Barcelona Liberals was evinced in a still more memorable manner.

“On the 4th of January 1836, a crowd assembled in the main square, and, with loud imprecations and yells of revenge, demanded the lives of the Carlist prisoners confined in the citadel. Thither they immediately repaired, and, not meeting with the slightest resistance from the garrison, scaled the walls, lowered the drawbridge, and entered the fortress; their leaders holding in their hands lists of those whom they had predetermined to massacre. When the place was completely in their possession, the leaders of the mob began to read over their lists of proscription, and, with as much deliberation as if they had been butchers selecting sheep for the knife, had their miserable victims dragged forward, and shot one after another, in the order of their names. The brave Colonel O'Donnell was the first that perished. His body, and that of another prisoner, were dragged through the streets, with shouts of ‘Liberty!’ The heads and hands were cut off, and the mutilated trunks, after having been exposed to every indignity, were cast upon a burning pile. The head of O'Donnell, after having been kicked about the streets as a football by wretches who mingled mirth with murder, was at last stuck up in front of a fountain; and *pieces of flesh were cut from his mangled and palpitating body, and eagerly devoured by the vilest and most depraved of women*. From the citadel the mob proceeded to the hospital, where three of the inmates were butchered; and from the hospital to the fort of Atanzares, where fifteen Carlist peasants shared the same fate. In all, *eighty-eight persons perished*.

“This deliberate massacre of defenceless prisoners, and the worse than fiendish excesses committed on their remains, satisfied the rioters for the first day; but, on the next, they presumed to proclaim that fruitful parent of innumerable murders—the constitution of 1812. This was too much to be borne. Even then, however, two hours elapsed before a dissenting voice was heard; when a note arrived from Captain Hyde Parker, of the Rodney, who not long before, in obedience to the orders of a peaceful Administration,

had landed fifteen thousand muskets in the city. His offer to support the authorities against the friends of the obnoxious constitution was not without effect. The leaders of the political movement were allowed to embark on board the Rodney, and the tumult subsided, rather from being lulled than suppressed. No punishment whatever was inflicted on the murderers and cannibals of the first day ; their conduct, perhaps, was not considered to deserve any.

“It was expected that when the riots of Barcelona were known at Zaragoza, the rabble of the latter city would have broken out into similar excesses ; but the authorities had recourse to the same disgraceful expedient to appease them which had proved successful before. They ordered four officers, a priest, and two peasants, reputed Carlists, to be strangled, and thus prevented the populace from becoming murderers, by assuming that character themselves.”

The humane philanthropists of the capital were not behind their provincial brethren in similar exploits.

“The first victim was a Franciscan friar who happened to be in the street. A report was then spread that the Jesuits had advised the deed ; and the senseless mob, frantic for revenge, rushed to the college. The gate having been forced open, the first person who entered was one dressed in the uniform of the urban militia, who told the students to quit the house, as it was not in search of them that they came.

“Instantly the college was filled with an armed mob, thirsting for blood, and the massacre began. Professor Bastan was bayoneted, and Father Ruedas stabbed to death. The professor of history and geography, Father Saun, was next murdered, and his head beat to pieces with clubs and hammers. The professor of rhetoric was dragged from his hiding-place, and that he might be the sooner despatched, knives were added to the murderous weapons which had been before employed. Another master, endeavouring to escape, was fired upon by an *urbano* ; and, as the shot missed, he was bayoneted in the back. Three in disguise escaped into the streets, hoping by this means to save their lives ; but they were murdered by the mob, to whom regular communications were made of what was passing inside the building. On every side were heard the groans of the dying, the screams of those who were vainly endeavouring to escape, the discharge of muskets, and the exulting shouts of the murderers. The students had been driven from these scenes of horror ; but several returned, in the hope of befriending their masters. One child threw his slender form over the prostrate body of his preceptor, and shared in the wounds under which he breathed his last.

“In one house perished fifteen individuals, assassinated in the most barbarous manner by those actually employed and armed to keep the public peace, some in regimentals and others in disguise. The provincial regiment of Granada then formed part of the Madrid garrison ; and the officers and men belonging to it, who were not passive spectators, appeared among the murderers. The death of their victims was not sufficient to satiate the fury of the rioters : some had their entrails torn out, others were dragged through the streets with ropes round their necks, and acts of cannibalism were perpetrated so abominable and disgusting, that it is impossible to enter into their loathsome details. The Franciscan convent and other places were the scenes of similar atrocities. These unhappy victims of ruthless Liberalism, perverting to its own ends the blindness of the multitude, had taken no part in politics : their only crime was, that they were clergymen and instructors of youth.”

Amidst these hideous atrocities, the Madrid Liberals, and

the Cadiz and Barcelona cliques, have steadily, and amidst the loud applause of their hungry dependents, pursued the usual selfish objects of democratic ambition. All useful establishments, all which relieved or blessed the poor, were rooted out; new offices and jurisdictions were created in every direction; numberless commissions were issued; and the well-paid Liberals began to roll in their carriages, and keep their boxes at the opera. The property of the Church, which in Spain is literally the endowment at once of education and the poor, was the first to be rooted out. Its character and usefulness is thus described by our author:—

“The convents in Spain are not like those which we had among us in Catholic times; and their suppression will necessarily excite indignation, besides giving rise to great abuses. They mostly partook of the character of the *hospice*, particularly in the northern provinces. To the peasants they often served as banking establishments, and greatly favoured agricultural improvements. The friars acted as schoolmasters, advocates, physicians, and apothecaries. Besides feeding and clothing the poor, and visiting the sick, they afforded spiritual consolation. They were considerate landlords and indulgent masters. They were peace-makers in domestic broils; and if a harvest failed, they supplied the seed that was to be confided to the earth the next year. They also provided periodical amusements and festivities, which the peasant will see abandoned with regret. Most of the convents had *fundaciones*, or endowments, for professors who taught rhetoric, philosophy, &c., besides keeping schools open for the poor. They also supplied curates when wanted, and their preachers are considered the best in Spain.

“Without entering into the question of the legality of these suppressions, or pointing out the folly of a government proceeding to such extremes that is not sure of its own existence for half a year, it may be stated, that all the expedients resorted to in our Henry VIII.’s time, to bring the monastic orders into disrepute, have been practised by the Spanish Liberals, and have failed. On the 19th January 1836, the monks in Madrid were driven out of their convents at two o’clock in the morning, without the slightest regard to age or infirmity. After being grossly insulted and reviled, several were waylaid in the streets by the *rayo*, or thunderbolt party, and cudgelled in the most unmerciful manner. The measure of ejectment was simultaneously carried into execution wherever the Government could enforce its commands; the great object in view being to seize on money, plate, and valuables.

“The Liberals have appointed commissions to receive the confiscated property, and the same abuses occur as in 1822. One instance will suffice in the way of illustration. The convent of St John of God, at Cadiz, well known to many of our countrymen, formerly fed and clothed a large number of poor; and its members, being mostly medical men, attended the sick and administered medicine *gratis*. The relief afforded by this institution was incalculable; and yet its funds, economically administered, and aided only by voluntary donations, were sufficient to satisfy every claim. The Liberals took its administration upon themselves; and the persons intrusted with it soon grew rich, and had their boxes at the theatre. They had profits on the contracts for provisions, medicine, and other supplies. The amount of relief afforded was also diminished; and yet, at the end of the first year, the ordinary funds were exhausted, and the new administrators obliged to make public appeals to the humane.”

The destitution thus inflicted on the clergy, and misery on the poor, has been unbounded.

“The suppression lately ordained by the Christino government may be called a general one, and the number of establishments to which it had extended, at the end of last September, was estimated at 1937, leaving 23,699 ejected inmates, whose annual maintenance, if paid at the promised rate, would not be less than £400,000.”

The creation of new jurisdictions, and the extirpation of all the ancient landmarks, was as favourite an object with the Spanish as it had been with the French revolutionists.

“The plan for the territorial divisions was also put forward. It may be here proper to observe, that formerly Spain was divided into fourteen sections, unequal in extent and population. It was now proposed to divide the territory, including the adjacent islands, into forty-nine provinces, or districts, taking the names of their respective capitals, except Navarre, Biscay, Guipuscoa, and Alava, which were to preserve their ancient denominations. The principality of Asturias was to become the province of Oviedo. Andalusia was to be parcelled out into seven provinces; Aragon into three; New Castile into five; Old Castile into eight; Catalonia into four; Estremadura into two; Galicia into four; Leon into three; Murcia into two; and Valencia into three. To each it was wished to give, as near as possible, a population of 250,000 persons; and the census taken in 1833, amounting to 12,280,000 souls, was taken for a standard. A new magistrate, called sub-delegate, was to be appointed to each province, and act under the immediate orders of the minister *Del Fomento*.”

And it is to support SUCH A CAUSE that the Quadruple Alliance was formed, and Lord John Hay, and the gallant marines of England, sent out, and £500,000 worth of arms and ammunition furnished to the revolutionary Government! Lord Palmerston says all this was done, because it is for *the interest of England* to promote the establishment of Liberal institutions in all the adjoining states. Is it, then, for the “interest of England” to establish universal suffrage, a single chamber, and a powerless throne, in the adjoining countries, in order that the reflection of their lustre there may tend to their successful introduction into this realm? Is it for the interest, any more than the honour, of England, to ally itself with a set of desperadoes, assassins, and murderers, and to promote, by all the means in its power, the extinction of liberty in those seats of virtuous institutions—the Basque provinces? What has been the return which the Liberals of Lisbon have made for the aid which placed their puppet on the throne, and gave them the command of the whole kingdom? To issue a decree raising threefold the duties on every species of British manufacture. A similar result may with certainty be anticipated, after all

the blood and treasure we have wasted, and more than all the character we have lost, from Evans' co-operation, if he shall succeed in beating down the Carlist cause ; because the urban democracy, which will then be established in uncontrolled power, will be necessarily actuated by the commercial passions and jealousy of that class in society.

One word more in regard to the Durango decree, on which such vehement efforts have been made to rouse the sympathy and excite the indignation of the British people. None can lament that decree more than we do : none can more earnestly desire its repeal ; and if our humble efforts can be of any avail, we implore the counsellors of Don Carlos, for the sake of humanity, to stop its execution—to obtain its repeal. But when it is said that it is such a stain upon the cause of the Spanish Conservatives, as renders their cause unworthy of the support of any good man, we are prompted to ask what cause did the English mercenaries go out to support ? Was it the cause of civilised, humane, legalised warfare ? No ! it was that of murder, robbery, and plunder ; of massacred babes and weltering valleys ; of conflagration, rapine, and extermination. They voluntarily joined their standards to those of a power which *had begun* the infamous system of giving no quarter, and, despite all the efforts of the Duke of Wellington's mission, *had resumed it*, and was prosecuting it with relentless rigour. They marched along with those exterminating bands into valleys, where they had burned every house, and slaughtered every second inhabitant, and clothed in weeds every mother and sister that survived. They marched along with these execrable bands, without any condition, without either proclaiming for themselves, or exacting from their allies, any other and more humane system of warfare. By their presence, however inefficient they may have been on the Biscayan shore, they have prolonged, for two years beyond the period when it would otherwise have terminated, the heart-rending civil war of Spain. If the 20,000 English and French auxiliaries, who retained an equal force of Carlists inactive in their front, had been removed, can there be a doubt Don Carlos would have been on the throne, and peace established in Spain two years ago ? How many thousands of Spanish old men and women have been slaughtered,

while Evans held the hands of their avenging heroes ? We have thus voluntarily ranged ourselves beside a frightful exterminating power : can we be surprised if we are met by the severities which that power's atrocities have rendered unavoidable ? We have joined hands with the murderer : though we may not have ourselves lifted the dagger, we have held the victim while our confederates plunged it in his heart ; and can we be surprised if we are deemed fit objects of the terrible law of retribution ?

Do we then counsel aid to Don Carlos, or any assistance to the cause he supports ? Far from it : we would not that one Englishman should be exposed to the contagion of the hideous atrocities which the revolutionists have committed, and to which the Carlists in self-defence have been driven, in every part of Spain. What we counsel is—what we have never ceased to urge ever since this hideous strife began in the Peninsula—*Withdraw altogether from it* : bring home the marines, the auxiliaries, the steamboats : send no more arms or ammunition from the Tower : declare to the Christiansos that, till they return to the usages of civilised war, we will not send them another gun under the Quadruple Treaty. It is a woful reflection, that our vast influence with the revolutionary Government, after the Quadruple Alliance, was perfectly adequate, if properly exerted, to have entirely stopped this exterminating warfare. But what must be our reflection, when we recollect that we have actually supported it ! And if hereafter a band of Cossacks or Pandours shall land on the coast of Kent, to perpetuate a bloody strife in the realms of England, to support the savage excesses of an Irish civil war, and spread mourning and woe through every cottage in England, it is no more than we have done to the Biscay mountaineers, and no more than what, under a just retribution, we may expect to endure from some equally unjust and uncalled-for aggression.

THE COPYRIGHT QUESTION

[BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, JANUARY 1842]*

WHOEVER has contemplated of late years the state of British literature, and compared it with the works of other countries who have preceded England in the career of arts or of arms, must have become sensible that some very powerful cause has, for a long period, been at work in producing the present ephemeral character by which it is in general distinguished. It is a matter of common complaint, that everything is now sacrificed to the desires or the gratification of the moment ; that philosophy, descending from its high station as the instructor of men, has degenerated into the mere handmaid of art ; that literature is devoted rather to afford amusement for a passing hour, than to furnish improvement to a long life ; and that poetry itself has become rather the reflection of the fleeting fervour of the public mind, than the well from which noble and elevated sentiments are to be derived. We have only to take up the columns of a newspaper, to see how varied and endless are the efforts made to amuse the public, and how few the attempts to instruct or improve them ; and if we examine the books which lie upon every drawing-room table, or the catalogues which show the purchases that have been made by any of the numerous book clubs or circulating libraries which have sprung up in the country, we shall feel no surprise at the fleeting nature of the literature which abounds, from the evidence there afforded of the transitory character of the public wishes which require to be gratified.

It is not to be supposed, however, from this circumstance, which is so well known as to have attracted universal observation, that the taste for standard or more solid literature

* Written when Lord Mahon's Copyright Bill was before Parliament.

has either materially declined, or is in any danger of becoming extinct. Decisive evidence to the contrary is to be found in the fact, that a greater number of reprints of standard works, both in theology, history, and philosophy, have issued from the press within the last ten years, than in any former corresponding period of British history. And what is still more remarkable, and not a little gratifying, it is evident, from the very different character and price of the editions of the older works which have been published of late years, that the desire to possess these standard works, and this thirst for solid information, is not confined to any one class of society, but that it embraces all ranks, and promises, before a long period has elapsed, to extend through the middle and even the working classes in the State a mass of useful and valuable information to which they have hitherto, in great part at least, been strangers. Not to mention the great extent to which extracts from these more valuable works have appeared in *Chambers' Journal*, the *Penny Magazines*, and other similar publications of the day, it is sufficient to mention two facts, which show at once what a thirst for valuable information exists among the middle classes of society. Regularly every two years, there issues from the press a new edition of *Gibbon's Rome*; and *Burke's Works* are now published, one year, in sixteen handsome volumes octavo, for the peer and the legislator, and next year in two volumes royal octavo, in double columns, for the tradesman and the shopkeeper.

As little is the false and vitiated taste of our general literature the result of any want of ability which is now directed to its prosecution. We have only to examine the periodical literature, or criticism of the day, to be convinced that the talent which is now devoted to literature is incomparably greater than it ever was in any former period of our history; and that ample genius exists in Great Britain, to render this age as distinguished in philosophy and the higher branches of knowledge, as the last was in military prowess and martial renown. If any one doubts this, let him compare the milk-and-water pages of the *Monthly Review* forty years ago, with the brilliant criticisms of Lockhart, Wilson, or Macaulay in the *Quarterly* or *Edinburgh Review*, or *Blackwood's Magazine* at this time; or the periodical

literature at the close of the war, with that which is now to be seen in the standard magazines of these times.* To a person habituated to the brilliant conceptions of the periodical writers at present, the corresponding literature in the eighteenth century appears insupportably pedantic and tedious. Nobody now reads the *Rambler* or the *Idler*; and the colossal reputation of Johnson rests almost entirely upon his profound and caustic sayings recorded in Boswell. Even the *Spectator* itself, though universally praised, is by no means now generally read; and nothing but the exquisite beauty of some of Addison's papers prevents the *Delias* and *Lucindas*, who figure in its pages, from sinking them in irrecoverable obscurity.

Here, then, is the marvel of the present time. We have a population in which, from the rapid extension of knowledge among all classes, a more extended class of readers desiring information is daily arising; in which the great and standard works of literature in theology, philosophy, and history, are constantly issuing in every varied form from the press; great talent of every description is constantly devoted to the prosecution of literature; but the *new works* given forth from the press are, with some splendid exceptions, frivolous or ephemeral, and the whole serious talents of the nation are turned into the perishable channels of the daily, weekly, monthly, or quarterly press. That such a state of things is anomalous and extraordinary, few probably will doubt; but that it is alarming and prejudicial in a national point of view, and may, if it continues unabated, produce both a degradation of the national character, and, in the end, danger or ruin to the national fortunes, though not so generally admitted, is not the less true, nor the less capable of demonstration.

In the first place, this state of things, when nearly the whole talent of the nation is directed to periodical literature, or works of evanescent interest, has a tendency to degrade the national character, because it taints the fountains from which the national thought is derived. We possess, indeed, in

* The poetical criticisms of Professor Wilson, in *Blackwood's Magazine*, are among the finest compositions in our language—distinguished alike by masterly acumen, profound scholarship, and cordial sympathy with the claims of contemporary genius.

the standard literature of Great Britain, a mass of thoughts and ideas which may well make the nation immortal, and which, to the end of time, will constitute the fountains from which grand and generous thoughts will be drawn by all future races of men. But the *existence* of these standard works is not enough ; still less is it enough in an age of rapid progress and evident transition, such as the present, when new interests are everywhere arising, new social and political combinations emerging, new national dangers to be guarded against, new national virtues required. For a nation in such a state of society to remain satisfied with its old standard literature, and not to aspire to produce anything which is at once durable and new, is the same solecism as it would be for a man to remain content with a wardrobe of fifty years' standing, and resolutely to resist the introduction of any of the fashions or improvements of later times. A nation which aspires to retain its eminence either in arts or in arms, must keep abreast of its neighbours ; if it does not advance, it will speedily fall behind, be thrown into the shade, and decline. It is not sufficient for England to refer to the works of Milton, Shakspeare, Johnson, or Scott ; she must prolong the race of these great men, or her intellectual career will speedily come to a close. Short and fleeting indeed is the period of transcendant greatness allotted to any nation in any branch of thought. The moment it stops, it begins to recede ; and to every empire which has made intellectual triumphs, is prescribed the same law which was felt by Napoleon in Europe and the British in India, that conquest is essential to existence.

But if the danger to our national literature is great, if the intellect and genius of Britain does not keep pace with the high destinies to which she is called, and the unbounded mental activity with which she is surrounded, much more serious is the peril thence inevitably accruing to the national character and the public fortunes. Whence is it that the noble and generous feelings are derived, which in time past have animated the breasts of our patriots, our heroes, and our legislators ? Whence but from the immortal pages of our poets, our orators, and historians ? What noble sentiments has the air of "Rule Britannia" awakened ; how many future Nelsons may the "Mariners of England," or Southey's

inimitable life of that hero, produce ! Sentiments such as these immortal works embody, "thoughts that breathe, and words that burn," are the true national inheritance ; they constitute the most powerful elements of national strength, for they form the character, without which all others are unavailing ; they belong alike to the rich and to the poor, to the prince and to the peasant ; they form the unseen bond which links together the high and the low, the rich and the poor ; and which, penetrating and pervading every class of society, tend both to perpetuate the virtues which have brought us to our present greatness, and arrest the decline which the influx of wealth, and the prevalence of commercial ideas, might otherwise have a tendency to produce. What would be the effect upon the fortunes of the nation, if this pure and elevated species of literature were to cease amongst us ; if everything were to be brought down to the cheapest market, and adapted to the most ordinary capacity ; if cutting articles for reviews, or dashing stories for magazines, were henceforth to form our staple literature ; and the race of the Miltons, the Shakspeares, the Grays, and the Campbells, was to perish under the cravings of a utilitarian age ? We may safely say that the national character would decline, the national spirit become enfeebled ; that generous sentiments would be dried up under the influence of transient excitement, and permanent resolve be extinguished by the necessity of present gain ; and that the days of Clive and Wellesley in India, and of Nelson and Wellington in Europe, would be numbered among the things that have been.

But if such dangers await us from the gradual extinction of the higher and nobler branches of our literature, still more serious are the evils which are likely to arise from the cessation to produce the more elevated class of works in history, philosophy, and theology, which are calculated and fitted to guide and direct the national thought. The dangers of such a calamity, though not so apparent at first sight, are in reality still more serious. For whence is the thought derived which governs the world, the spirit which guides its movements, the rashness which mars its fortunes, the wisdom which guards against its dangers ? Whence but from the great fountains of original thought, which are never

unlocked in any age but to the few master-spirits thrown at distant intervals by God among mankind. The press, usually and justly deemed so powerful; the public voice, whose thunders shake the land; the legislature, which embodies and perpetuates by legal force its cravings, are themselves but the reverberation of the thought of the great of the preceding age. The tempests sweep round and agitate the globe; but it is to the wisdom of Juno alone that Æolus opens the cavern of the winds.

This truth is unpalatable to the masses; it is distasteful to legislators; it is irksome to statesmen, who conceive they enjoy, and appear to have, the direction of affairs; but it is illustrated by every page of history, and a clear perception of its truth constitutes one of the most essential requisites of wise government. In vain does the ruling power, whether monarchical, aristocratic, or republican, seek to escape from the government of thought: it is itself under the direction of the great intellects of the preceding age. When it thinks, it is original,—when it thinks, it is most fearlessly asserting its boasted inherent power of self-government,—it is itself obeying the impulse communicated to the human mind by the departed great. All the marked movements of mankind, all the evident turns or changes communicated to the current of general opinion, have arisen from the efforts of individual genius. The age must have been prepared for them, or their effect would have been small; but the age without them would never have discovered the light: the reflected sunbeams must have been descending on the mountains, but his earliest rays strike first on the summit.

Who rescued mankind from the abuses of the Roman Catholic Church, and preserved the primeval simplicity of Christianity from the pernicious indulgences of the Church of Rome, and opened a new era of religious light upon both hemispheres? Martin Luther. Who fearlessly led his trembling mariners across the seemingly interminable waste of the Atlantic wave, and discovered at length the New World, which had haunted even his infant dreams? Christopher Columbus. Who turned mankind aside from the returning circle of syllogistic argument to the true method of philosophic investigation? Lord Bacon. Who introduced a new code into the contests of nations, and subjected even the

savage passions of war to a humane code? Grotius. The influence of Montesquieu has been felt for above a century in every country of Europe, in social philosophy. Who discovered the mechanism of the universe, and traced the same law in the fall of an apple as in the giant orbit of the comets? Sir Isaac Newton. Who carried the torch of severe and sagacious inquiry into the recesses of the human mind, and weaned men from the endless maze of metaphysical scepticism? Dr Reid. Who produced the fervent spirit, which, veiled in philanthropy, redolent of benevolence, was so soon to be extinguished in the blood of the French Revolution? Rousseau and Voltaire. Who discovered the miracle of steam, and impelled civilisation, as by the force of central heat, to the desert places of the earth? James Watt. What unheeded power shook even the solid fabric of the British constitution, and all but destroyed, by seeking unduly to extend, the Liberties of England? Lord Brougham and the Liberal writers of Great Britain. Whose policy has ruled the commercial system of England for twenty years, and by the *false application* of *just abstract* principles altered the destinies of the state? Adam Smith. Whose spirit arrested the devastation of the French Revolution, and checked the madness of the English Reformers? Edmund Burke. Who is the real parent of the blind and heartless delusions of the New Poor-Law Bill? Malthus. Who have elevated men from the baseness of utilitarian worship to the grandeur of mental elevation? Wordsworth and Coleridge. All these master-spirits, for good or for evil, communicated their own impress to the generation which succeeded them. The seed thus scattered took often many years to come to maturity, and many different hands, often a new generation, were required to reap it; but when the harvest appeared, it at once was manifest whose hand had sown it. "Show me what one or two great men, detached from public life, but with minds full, which must be disburdened, are thinking in their closets in this age, and I will tell you what will be the theme of the orator, the study of the philosopher, the staple of the press, the guide of the statesman, in the next."

Observe, too—and this is a most essential point in the present argument—that all these great efforts of thought

which have thus given a mighty heave to human affairs, and, in the end, have fairly turned aside into a new channel even the broad and varied stream of general thought, have been *in direct contradiction* to the spirit of the age by which they were surrounded, and which swayed alike the communities, the press, and the government, under the influence of which they were placed. Action and reaction appears to be the great law, not less of the moral than of the material world—the counteracting principles, which, like the centripetal and centrifugal forces in physics, maintain, amid its perpetual oscillation, the general equilibrium of the universe. But whence is to come the reaction, if the human mind is perpetually influenced by the press, and it in its turn is adapted to the prevailing taste of its readers; if reviews, magazines, and journals, direct and form public opinion; if individual thought is nothing but the perpetual re-echo of what it hears around it? It is in the solitary thought of individual greatness that this is found. It is there that the fountains are unlocked which let in a new stream on human affairs; which communicate a fresh and a purer element to the flood charged with the selfishness and vices of the world: it is there that the counteracting force is found, which, springing from small beginnings, at length converts a world in error. Archimedes was physically wrong, but he was morally right, when he said, “Give me a fulcrum, and I will move the whole earth.” Give mankind the fulcrum of a great mind, and the world itself will obey its impulse.

It is always in resisting, never by yielding to public opinion, that these great master-spirits exert their power. The conqueror, indeed, who is to act by the present arms of men, the statesman who is to sway by present measures the agitated masses of society, have need of general support. Napoleon said truly, that he was so long successful because he always marched with the opinions of five millions of men. But the great intellects which are destined to give a permanent impress to thought—which are destined to act generally, not upon the present but the next generation—are almost invariably in direct opposition to general opinion. In truth, it is the resistance of a powerful mind to the flood of error by which it is surrounded, which, like the compres-

sion that elicits the power of steam, creates the moving power which alters the moral destiny of mankind.

Was it by yielding to public opinion that Bacon emancipated mankind from the fetters of the Aristotelian philosophy? Was it by yielding to the Ptolemaic cycles that Copernicus unfolded the true mechanism of the heavens? Was it by yielding to the dogmas of the Church that Galileo established the earth's motion? Was it by yielding to the Romish corruptions that Luther established the Reformation? Was it by concession that Latimer and Ridley "lighted a flame which, by the grace of God, shall never be extinguished?" Was it by conceding to the long-established system of commercial restriction, that Smith unfolded the truths of the wealth of nations?—or by chiming in with the deluge of infidelity and democracy, with which he was surrounded, that Burke arrested the devastation of the French Revolution? What were the eloquence of Pitt, the arms of Nelson and Wellington, but the ministers of those principles which, in opposition to general opinion, he struck out at once, and with a giant's arm? "Genius creates by a single conception; in a single principle, opening, as it were, on a sudden to genius, a great and new system of things is discovered. The statuary conceives a statue at once, which is afterwards slowly executed by the hands of many."*

If such be the vast and unbounded influence of original thought on human affairs, national character, public policy, and national fortunes, what must be the effect of that state of things which goes to check such original conception?—to vulgarise and debase genius, and turn aside the streams of first conception into the old and polluted channels? If the reaction of originality against commonplace—of freedom against servility—of truth against falsehood—of experience against speculation—is the great steadying power in human affairs, and the only safe regulator of the oscillations of public thought, what are we to say to that direction of literary effort, and that tendency in the public mind, which evidently tend to repress, and may ere long altogether extinguish these great and creative conceptions? Yet, that

* DISRAELI'S *Essay on Lit. Char.*

such is the evident tendency of society and public opinion around us, is obvious, and universally observed. "The time has come," says the liberal Bulwer,* "when nobody will fit out a ship for the intellectual Columbus to discover new worlds, but when everybody will subscribe for his setting up a steamboat between Dover and Calais. The immense superficialities of the public, as it has now become, operates two ways in detracting from the profundity of writers—it renders it no longer necessary for an author to make himself profound before he writes ; and it encourages those writers who are profound, by every inducement, not of lucre merely, but of fame, to exchange deep writing for agreeable writing. The voice which animates the man ambitious of wide fame, does not, according to the beautiful line in Rogers, whisper to him, 'Aspire,' but 'Descend.' He must 'stoop to conquer.' Thus, if we look abroad in France, anterior to the Revolution of 1830, where the reading public is much less numerous than in England, a more subtle and refined tone is prevalent in literature ; while in America, where it is infinitely larger, the literature is incomparably more superficial. Some high-souled literary men, indeed, desirous rather of truth than of fame, are actuated unconsciously by the spirit of the times ; but actuated they necessarily are, just as the wisest orator who uttered only philosophy to a thin audience of Sages, and mechanically abandons his refinements and his reasonings, and expands into a louder tone and more familiar manner as the assembly increases, and the temper of the popular mind is insensibly communicated to the mind that addresses it."—"There is in great crowds," says Cousin, "an ascendant which is almost magical, which subdues at once the strongest minds ; and the same man who had been a serious and instructive professor to a hundred thoughtful students, soon becomes light and superficial where he is called to address a more extended and superficial audience."

There can be no doubt of the justice of the principles advanced by these profound writers : in truth, they are not new ; they have been known and acted upon in every age of mankind. "You are wrong to pride yourself," said the

* *England and the English*, p. 446.

Grecian sage to an Athenian orator, who first delivered a speech amidst the thundering acclamations of his audience : “if you had spoken truly, these men would have given no signs of approbation.” It is in the extension of the power of judgment of literary compositions—of conferring wealth and bestowing fame on their authors—to the vast and excitable, but superficial mass of mankind, that the true cause of the ephemeral and yet entrancing and exciting character of the literature of the present age is to be found. Some superficial observers imagine that the taste for novels and romances will wear itself out, and an appreciation of a higher class of literature spread generally among the middle classes. They might as well suppose that the time will come when men will cease to eat, or youth be no longer attracted by the fascination of beauty.

It is in this fact, that the immense number of mankind in every age are influenced by their passions or their feelings, compared with the small portion who are under the influence of their reason, that the true cause and extraordinary multitude of a certain class of novels in the present day is to be found. Without depreciating the talent of many of these writers—without undervaluing the touching scenes of pathos, and admirable pictures of humour which they present—it may safely be affirmed, that they exhibit a melancholy proof of the tendency of our lighter literature ; and that if such works were to increase in every succeeding age as they have done in the present, a ruinous degradation both to our literary and national character would ensue. The cause which has led to their rapid rise and unprecedented success, is obvious. It is, that the middle classes have become the most numerous body of readers ; and therefore, the humour, the incidents, the pathos, which are familiar to them, or excite either amusement or sympathy in their breasts, constitute the surest passports to popularity. It was the same cause which produced the boors of Ostade, or the village-wakes of Teniers.

It is nevertheless perfectly true, as has been well remarked by Lord Brougham, that there never was such a mistake as to imagine that mob oratory consists only in low buffoonery, quick repartee, or happy personal hits. On some occasions, and certainly on the hustings, it generally does. But there

are other occasions on which the middle and even the working classes are accessible to the most noble and elevated sentiments ; and exhibit an aptitude both for the quick apprehension of an argument, and the due appreciation of a generous sentiment, which could not be surpassed in any assembly in the kingdom. The working classes, moreover, especially in the manufacturing districts, are so constantly in contact with each other, and are so much habituated to the periodical press, that they have acquired an extraordinary quickness of perception in matters which fall within their observation ; while the numerous vicissitudes to which they are exposed by commercial distress, have, in many places, given a serious and reflecting turn to their minds, which are perhaps not so general amidst the frivolities of the higher, or the selfish pursuits of the middle classes. In assemblies of bodies of working men, brought together by the call for some social, and not political object, as the promotion of emigration, the extension of education, or the arresting the evils of pauperism, no one can have addressed them without observing that he cannot state his argument too closely, enforce it with facts too forcibly, or attend to the graces of composition with too sedulous care.

But all this notwithstanding, it is in vain to expect that the patronage or support of the middle or working classes is ever to afford a sufficient inducement to secure works either of profound or elevated thought, or of the highest excellence in any branch either of poetry, philosophy, history, or economics. The reason is, that it is only by appealing to principles or ideas *already in some degree familiar to the great body of the people*, that you can succeed in making any impression upon them. Truth, if altogether new, is entirely thrown away upon them ; it is of exceeding slow descent, even through the most elevated intellects of the middle classes ; upon the working, it produces at first no effect whatever. The reason is, that the great majority of them have not intellects sufficiently strong to make at once the transition from error to truth, unless the evils of error have been long and forcibly brought before their senses. If that be the case, indeed, the humblest classes are the very first to see the light. Witness the Reformation in Germany ; and the Revolution in France,

in its ultimate effects, is probably destined to illustrate the same truth. They are so, because they are less interested than their superiors in the maintenance of error. But if the new discoveries of thought relate not to *present* but to remote evils, and do not appeal to what is universally felt, but only to what may with difficulty be gathered from study or reflection, nothing is more certain than that the progress even of truth is exceedingly slow; that the human mind is to the last degree reluctant to admit any great change of opinion; and that, in general, at least one generation must descend to their graves before truths, ultimately deemed the most obvious, are gradually forced upon the reluctant consent of mankind. Mr Burke's speeches never were popular in the House of Commons, and his rising up acted like a dinner-bell in thinning the benches. *Now* his words are dwelt on by the wise, quoted by the eloquent, diffused among the many. Oratory, to be popular, must be in advance of the audience, and *but a little* in advance. Profound thought may rule mankind in future, but unless stimulated by causes obvious to all, will do little for present reputation. Hence it was that Bacon bequeathed his reputation to the generation after the next.

As little is there any reason to hope that the obvious and gratifying return to serious and standard publications, evinced by the numerous reprints of our classical writers that issue from the press, can be taken as any sufficient indication that there exists in the public mind an adequate antidote to these evils. The fact of these reprints of standard works issuing from the press, certainly proves sufficiently that there is a class, and a numerous one too, of persons who, however much they may like superficial literature as an amusement for the hour, yet look to our standard works for the volumes which are to fill their libraries. But that by no means affords a sufficient guarantee that the public will give any encouragement to the composition or publication of standard works at the present time, and with the present temper of the public mind. There is a most material difference between the reprint of a standard work, which has already acquired a fixed reputation, and the composition of a new work of a serious and contemplative cast, especially by an unknown author, and more particularly if it is in opposition to the

general current of public opinion. It may safely be predicted of such a work, that if it really contains new and important truths, it will be distasteful to the majority of readers in all classes; and that whatever fame may in future be bestowed on its author, or however widely it may hereafter be read by the public, or command the assent of mankind, he will be in his grave before either effect takes place. Adam Smith, if we mistake not, had died before the *Wealth of Nations* had got past even a second edition. Several years had elapsed before a hundred copies of Mr Hume's *History* were sold; and he himself has told us that nothing but the earnest entreaties of his friends induced him, in the face of such a cold and chilling reception, to continue his historical labours. Although, therefore, there exists a steady demand for standard classical works, it is by no means equally apparent that anything like an adequate encouragement in the general case for the composition of *new* standard works, is to be found in the present state of society. Few men have the self-denial, like Bacon, to bequeath their reputation to the generation after the next, and to labour for nothing during the whole of their own lifetime. The chance of finding persons who will do so is much diminished, when society has reached that period in which, by simply lowering his mode of composition, and descending from being the instructor to be the amuser of men, the author can obtain both profit and celebrity from a numerous and flattering class of readers.

The reason why periodical literature, how able soever, so seldom succeeds in acquiring a lasting reputation, is this. It is too deeply impregnated with the passions, the interests, and the errors of *the moment*. Its predictions have too often been disproved by the event. This arises from the same cause which Bulwer and Cousin have remarked as necessarily changing the character of oratory in proportion to the size of the audience to which it is addressed. Temporary literature necessarily shares in the temporary nature of the passions of which it is the mirror. Every one who is accustomed to that species of composition knows that, if he does not strike at the prevailing feeling of the moment, in the great majority of his readers he will produce no sort of impression, and he will very soon find his contributions

returned upon his hand by the editor. "The great talent of Mirabeau," says Dumont, "consisted in this, that he intuitively saw to what point in the minds of his audience to apply his strength ; and he sent it home there with the strength of a giant." That is precisely the kind of talent required in periodical literature ; and accordingly, every one engaged in it is aware that he writes an article for a magazine or review in a totally different style from what he does anything intended for durable existence. If we turn to the political articles in most periodicals ten or fifteen years old, what a multitude of facts do we find distorted, of theories disproved by the result, of anticipations which have proved fallacious, of hopes which have terminated only in disappointment ! This is no reproach to the writers. It is the necessary result of literary and philosophical talent keenly and energetically applied to the interests of the hour. It is in the cool shade of retirement, and by men detached from the contests of the world, that truth in social and moral affairs is really to be discovered ; but how are we to look for that quality amidst the necessary cravings of an excited age, seeking after something new in fiction, or the passions of a divided community finding vent on politics in the periodical press ? If found at all, it will be in those whose minds are mainly set on general principles, and who regard passing events chiefly as they illustrate them.

The great profits which now accrue to authors who are lucky enough to hit upon a popular view with the public, is another circumstance which tends most powerfully to stamp this fleeting and impassioned character, both upon our creations of imagination and our periodical effusions of political argument. The days are gone past when Johnson wrote in a garret in Fleet Street the sonorous periods which a subsequent century have admired, under the name of Chatham. The vast increase of readers, particularly in the middle and lower ranks, has opened sources of literary profit, and avenues to literary distinction, unknown in any former age. A successful article in a magazine or review brings a man into notice in the literary world just as effectually as a triumphant *debüt* makes the fortune of an actress or singer. But how is this success to be kept up ? or how is this profit to be continued ? Not certainly by turning aside from periodical literature to

the cool shades of meditation or retirement, but by engaging still more deeply in the stirring bustle of the times ; by catering to the craving for continued excitement, or plunging into the stream of turbulent politics. If, instead of doing so, he sits "on a hill retired," and labours for the benefit of mankind and the instruction of posterity in a future age, he will soon find the cold shoulder of the public turned towards him. He may acquire immortal fame by his labours, but he will soon find that, unless he has a profession or independent fortune, he is gradually verging towards a neglected home—the garret. Whereas, if he engages in the pursuit of fiction, or plunges into the stream of politics, he will ere long be gratified by finding, if he has talents adequate to the undertaking, that fame and fortune pour in upon him ; that his society is courted, and his name celebrated ; and not unfrequently political patronage rewards passing talent or service with durable honours or substantial favours.

Nothing, indeed, is more certain than that nothing great, either in philosophy, literature, or art, was ever purchased by gold ; that genius unfolds her treasures to disinterested votaries only ; and that but one reason can be assigned why such clusters of great men occasionally appear in the world, that "God Almighty," in Hallam's words, "has chosen at those times to create them." But admitting that neither gold nor honours can purchase genius, or unlock truth, the question is, to what extent they may *draw aside talent*, even of the highest class, from the cold and shivering pinnacles of meditation and truth, into the rich and flowery vales of politics, amusement, or imagination. The point is not what they can do, but what they can cause to be *left undone*. Doubtless there are occasionally to be found men of the very highest character of intellect and principle, who, born to direct mankind, feel their destiny, and, in defiance of all the seductions of fame or interest, pursue it with invincible perseverance to the end. But such men are rare. Above all, they are least likely to arise, and most likely to be diverted from their proper destiny, in an age of commercial opulence and greatness, or of strong political or social excitement. The universal thirst for gold ; the general experience of its necessity to confer not merely comfort but respectability ;

the facility with which genius may acquire it, if it will condescend to fall in with the temper of the times ; the utter barrenness of its efforts, if it indulges merely in the abstract pursuit of truth, how clearly soever destined for immortality in a future age ; the distinction to be immediately acquired by lending its aid to the strife of parties, or condescending to amuse an insatiable public ; the long-continued neglect which is certain to ensue, if works likely to procure durable celebrity are attempted—are so many temptations which assail the literary adventurer on his path, and which, if not resisted by the heroic sense of duty of a Thalaba, will infallibly divert him from his appointed mission of piercing the idol of Error to the heart.

These causes of danger to our standard literature become more pressing, when it is recollected that, by the fixed practice and apparently constitutional usage of this mixed aristocratic and commercial realm, no distinctions of rank are ever conferred upon literary ability, how distinguished soever. Sir Walter Scott, indeed, and Sir Edward Bulwer have been made baronets ; but, in the first instance, it was on the personal friend of George IV. that this honour was conferred, not the great novelist ; in the second, to the parliamentary supporter, the heir of an ancient and noble family, not the most brilliant and profound novelist of the age, how well soever his individual genius merited it, that the reward was given. The honour would never have been bestowed on the Scotch novelist, if he had been unknown in the aristocratic circles of London, and never dined at Carlton House ; nor on the English, if he had been a stranger to the Whig coteries of the metropolis.

The influence of this circumstance is very great ; and the want of any such national honours is an additional cause of the fleeting and ephemeral character of our general literature. The soldier and the sailor are certain, if they distinguish themselves, of obtaining such rewards. Look at the long lists of Knights-commanders of the Bath, in both services, who were promoted by the last brevet. Nothing can be more just than conferring such distinctions on these gallant men ; they compensate to them the inequality of their fortunes, and stimulate them to heroic and daring exploits. The successful lawyer often succeeds in the end in taking

precedence of every peer in the realm, and becomes the founder of a family which transmits his wealth and his honours to remote generations. But to literary abilities none of these higher and elevating objects of ambition are open. The great author can neither found a family nor acquire a title ; and if he does not choose to degrade himself by falling in with the passions or frivolities of the age, it is more than probable that, like the Israelites of old, his life will be spent in wandering in the desert, and he will see only in his last hour, and that from afar, the promised land. And yet what is the influence of the soldier, the lawyer, or the statesman, compared to that which a great and profound writer exercises ? and what do the monarchs, the cabinets, and the generals of one age do, but carry into effect the principles enforced by the master-spirits of the preceding ?

It is evident, therefore, that there is a variety of causes, some of a positive, some of a negative kind, which are operating together to depress the character of our literature ; to chill the aspirations of genius or the soarings of intellect ; to enlist fancy on the side of fashion, and genius in the pursuit of fiction ; to bind down immortal intellect to passing interests, and compel it to surrender "to party what was meant for mankind." This is not a class interest ; it is a universal concern. It involves nothing less than the dearest interests and future fate of the nation ; for what sort of people will we soon become, if temporary passions, interests, or frivolities alone engross the talent of the empire ; and the great lights of genius and intellect, which might enable us to keep abreast of our fortunes, become extinct among us ? What are we to say is likely to be the conduct of our statesmen, our legislators, or our rulers, if the elevating and ennobling principles of former times are gradually forgotten, and no successors to the race of giants arise to direct, purify, and elevate the public mind, amidst the rapidly increasing dangers which assail it, in the later and more opulent stages of society ? What are we to expect but that we are to fall into the listless cravings of the Athenians, who were constantly employed in seeing and hearing something new ; or to the deplorable destiny of the Byzantine empire, which, amidst incessant literary exertion and amusement, did not produce a single work of genius during a thousand years ? And if such

mingled talent and frivolity should permanently lay hold of the British mind, what can we look for but that our latter end shall be like theirs, and that centuries of progressive degradation and ultimate national extinction, will terminate the melancholy era of social regeneration on which we have just entered.

It is perhaps of still more importance to observe, what, though equally true, is not so generally admitted, that these causes of degradation, so far from being likely to be alleviated or arrested by the progressive extension of the taste for reading among the middle and lower classes of society, are likely to be daily increased by that very circumstance. As it is the extension of the power of reading to the middle and working classes, that has, in great part, produced the present ephemeral character of our literature, and the incessant demand for works of excitement ; so nothing appears more certain, than that it is likely to increase with the extension of that class of readers. The middle and lower orders, indeed, who are so closely brought into contact with the real difficulties and stern realities of life, will always, in every popular community, cause a large part of the talent and intellect of the nation to be directed, not merely to works of amusement, but to works of utility, and having an immediate bearing on the improvement of art, the extension of commerce, or the amelioration of the material interests of society. But these labours, however useful and important, belong to a secondary class of thought, and encourage only a second class of literary labourers. They are the instruments of genius, not genius itself ; they are the generals and colonels in the great army of thought, but not the commander-in-chief. "In the infancy of a nation," says Bacon, "arms do prevail ; in its manhood, arms and learning for *a short season* ; in its decline, commerce and the mechanical arts." The application of energy, talent, and industry to material purposes, however useful or necessary those purposes may be, savours of the *physical* necessities, not the *spiritual* dignity of man ; and the general turning of public effort in that direction, is a symptom of the decline of nations. Let us not, therefore, lay the flattering unction to our souls, that the craving for the excitement of fiction, or the realities of mechanical improvement, which have extended so immensely among us, with

the spread of knowledge among the middle and working classes, is to prove any antidote to the decline of the highest class of literature amongst us. On the contrary, it is among the most powerful causes which produce it.

Real genius, intellect of the highest character, it can never be too often repeated, works chiefly for the future ; it rarely produces any impression, or brings in any considerable reward, in the present. Works of fiction or imagination, indeed, such as Sir Walter Scott's novels, or Lord Byron's poetical romances, may produce an immediate impression, and yet be destined for durable existence ; but such a combination is extremely rare, and is in general confined entirely to works that please. Those that instruct or improve, destined to a yet longer existence, have a much slower growth, and often do not come to maturity till after the death of the author. "The solitary man of genius," says Disraeli, "is arranging the materials of instruction and curiosity from every country and every age ; he is striking out, in the concussion of new light, a new order of ideas for his own times ; he possesses secrets which men hide from their contemporaries, truths they dared not utter, facts they dared not discover. View him in the stillness of meditation, his eager spirit busied over a copious page, and his eye sparkling with gladness. He has concluded what his countrymen will hereafter cherish as the legacy of genius. You see him now changed ; and the restlessness of his soul is thrown into his very gestures ! Could you listen to the vaticinator ! But the next age only will quote his predictions. If he be the truly great author, he will be best comprehended by posterity ; for the result of ten years of solitary meditation has often required a whole century to be understood and to be adopted."

We are no enemies to the conferring honours by the Crown upon the most distinguished of our scientific and literary men. To many, such elevation would form a most appropriate reward ; to all, a legitimate object of ambition. But we are exceedingly jealous of the influence of all such court favours upon the assertors of political, social, or historical truth. We look to other countries, and we behold the withering effect of such distinctions upon the masculine independence of thought. We recollect the drilled and well-paid literature of France,

under the Emperor Napoleon, and we ask, what has come of all its high-sounding panegyric of his measures? We read the annals of the titled historians of Austria, Prussia, and Russia, and we sicken for the breath of a freeman. We remember it was only under a Trajan that a Tacitus could pour forth the indignation of expiring virtue at surrounding baseness, and we shudder to think how few Trajans are to be found in the decline of nations.

The only legitimate and safe reward of the highest class of literary merit, next to the consciousness of discharging its mission, is to be found in *the prolongation of the period* during which its profits are to accrue to the family of the author. We at once concede that even this motive, higher and more honourable than that of present or selfish gain, will never be sufficient to induce the loftiest class of genius or intellect to produce any great work. It is an overpowering sense of public duty, an ardent inspiration after deserved immortality, the yearnings of a full mind, which must be delivered, which are the real causes of such elevated efforts. They are given only to a few, because to a few only has God assigned the power of directing mankind. But, admitting that the divine inspiration is the fountain of truth—the “pure well of genius undefiled”—the point to be considered is, how is the stream which it pours forth to be kept in its proper channel?—how is it to be prevented from becoming rapidly merged in the agitated waves of human passion, or sunk in the bottomless morasses of interest or selfishness? By giving something like perpetuity to the rights of authorship, this can be best effected; because it is by so doing that we will most effectually ally it to the purest and most elevated motives which, in sublunary matters, can influence mankind.

Look at the merchant, the lawyer, the manufacturer, at all who amass fortunes, and leave the colossal estates which gradually elevate their possessors to the ranks of the aristocracy, and fill up in that class the chasms which fortune, extravagance, or the extinction of families, so often produce. What are the motives which animate the founders of such families to a life of exertion, and produce the astonishing effects in the accumulation of wealth which we daily see around us? It is not the desire of individual enjoyment;

for, whatever his son may have, the father seldom knows anything of wealth but of the labour by which it is created. It is not even for the distinction which he is to acquire during his own lifetime ; for, if that were his object, it would be far more effectually and more pleasantly gained, by simply spending his wealth as fast as he made it. What, then, is the motive which animates him to a life of labour, and stimulates him through half a century to such incessant exertions ? It is the hope of transmitting his fortune to his children—of securing the independence of those most dear to him ; it is the desire of founding a family—of leaving his descendants in a very different rank of life from that in which he himself moved, or his fathers before him. They know little of the human mind who are not aware that this desire, when it once takes hold of the mind, supplies the want of all other enjoyments, and that it is the secret unobserved cause of the greatest individual and national efforts that have ever been achieved among mankind.

To the due action of this important principle, however, a certain degree of *permanence* in the enjoyment of the fortune acquired is indispensable. Men will never make such long-continued or sustained efforts for a temporary or passing interest. Does any man suppose that a merchant or lawyer would toil for fifty years, if he knew that he could only expect an eight-and-twenty years' lease of his fortune ? "Give a man," says Arthur Young, "a seven years' lease of a garden, and he will soon convert it into a wilderness : give him a freehold in an arid desert, and he will not be long of converting it into a garden." Would the industry of Great Britain have achieved the wonders which it has, if the old Jewish system of making all estates revert to the nation at the end of every fifty years were to be introduced, or the Chartists' more summary mode of dividing every fortune at the death of the owner were put in practice ? Truly, we should soon become an ephemeral and fleeting generation in wealth as well as literature, if such maxims were acted upon ; and "to-day let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," would at once become the order of the day.

If the combined force of all these circumstances be taken into consideration, it must be evident to every impartial

mind, not only that it is not surprising that new standard literature has of late years so much declined amongst us, but that the only wonderful thing is, that it has not declined much more than it has. The causes which produce great and sustained efforts in every other department of human activity, are not only withheld from the highest class of literary or philosophical exertion, but they are perpetually exposed to the disturbing and detracting influence of the prospect of fame and fortune being attained by condescending to cater for the passions or wants of the moment. To the continued energy and activity of the merchant or manufacturer we offer the possession of unbounded wealth, and the prospect of transmitting an elevated, perhaps an ennobled, race to future times. To the soldier or the sailor we hold out a vast succession of titled rewards, and to the highest among such race of heroes, hereditary peerages—the deserved reward of their valour. To the indefatigable industry and persevering energy of the lawyer we offer a seat on the Woolsack, precedence of every temporal peer in the realm, the highest temporal dignities and hereditary honours which the State can afford. What, then, do we offer to the philosopher, the poet, or the historian, to the leaders of thought and the rulers of nations, to counteract the attractions of immediate or temporary ambition, and lead them abreast of their brethren at the bar, in the field, or the senate, to great and glorious efforts, to durable and beneficent achievement? Why, we present them with petty traders anxiously watching the expiration of eight-and-twenty years of copyright, or hoping for the death of the author, if he has survived it; and ready, with uplifted hands, to pounce upon the glorious inheritance of his children, and realise for their business-like skill and mercantile capital the vast profits which had been bequeathed by genius to the age which followed it.

It is a total mistake to imagine that the profits of works of imagination, unless they are of the very highest class, ever equal those which in the end accrue to the publishers of standard works of history or philosophy. The booksellers, since Gibbon's death, are said to have made £200,000 by his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*; and hardly a year passes, that a new edition of his immortal

work, or of Hume's *History of England*, does not issue from the press. The sums realised by the bookselling trade from the different editions of the *Wealth of Nations*, would have constituted a large fortune for the heirs of Adam Smith. What a vast inheritance would Milton or Shakspeare have left to their descendants, if any there be, if they could have bequeathed to them the exclusive right of publishing their own works, even for half a century after their own death ! Look at the classics. What countless sums have been realised by the booksellers and publishers from the successive reprints, in every country of Europe, of the works of Livy, Cicero, and Tacitus, since the revival of letters three hundred years ago ! Why, the profits made by the publication of any one of these works would have made a princely fortune, and founded a ducal family. So true is it that literary or philosophical talent of the highest description, so far from being unproductive of wealth to its possessors, is in the end productive of a far greater and more lasting source of income, than the efforts either of the lawyer, the merchant, or the statesman. The only reason why great fortunes are not made in the one way as well as in the other, is because the labour employed on that, the highest species of human adventure, is almost always unproductive in the outset, and lucrative only in the end ; and that the injustice of human laws confiscates the property at the very moment when the crop is beginning to come to maturity.

They know little of human nature who imagine that such prospect of remote advantage would have little influence on literary exertion. Look at life insurances. How large a proportion of the most active and useful members of society, especially among the middle and higher classes, are connected with these admirable institutions. How many virtuous and industrious men deny themselves, during a long life, many luxuries, and even comforts, in order that, after their death, they may bequeath an independence to their children. Eighty thousand persons are now connected with these institutions in Great Britain, and that number is hourly on the increase. Here, then, is decisive evidence of the extent to which the desire of transmitting independence to our children acts upon mankind, even where it is to be won only by a life of continued toil and self-denial. Can

there be the slightest doubt that the same motive, combining with the desire to benefit mankind, or acquire durable fame, would ere long come to operate powerfully upon the highest class of intellectual effort, and that an adequate counteraction would thus be provided to the numerous attractions which now impel it into temporary exertion? And observe, the *motives* which lead to present self-denial in order to transmit an independence to posterity, by the effecting life assurances, are nearly allied to those which prompt great minds to magnanimous and durable efforts for the good of their species; for both rest upon the foundation of all that is noble or elevated in human affairs—a denial of self, a regard to futurity, and a love for others.

The tenacity with which any extension even of the term of copyright enjoyed by authors, or their assignees, is resisted by a certain portion of the London booksellers, and those who deal in the same line, affords the most decisive proof of the magnitude of the profits which are to be obtained by the republication, the moment the copyright has expired, of works that have acquired a standard reputation, and of the vast amount of literary property, the inheritance of the great of the past age, which is annually confiscated for the benefit of the booksellers in the present. These men look to the matter as a mere piece of mercantile speculation; their resistance is wholly founded upon the dread of a diminution of their profits, wrung from the souls of former authors; they would never have put forward, with so much anxiety as they have done, Mr Warburton and Mr Wakley to fight their battles, if they had not had very extensive profits to defend in the contest. The vehemence of their opposition affords a measure of the magnitude of the injustice which is done to authors by the present state of the law, and of the amount of encouragement to great and glorious effort which is annually withheld by the Legislature. The contest, in which they have hitherto proved successful, is not a contest between authors and a particular section of the booksellers; it is, in reality, a contest between the nation and a limited section of the bookselling trade. It is, in the most emphatic sense, a class against a *national* interest. For on the one side are a few London booksellers who make colossal fortunes by realising, shortly after

their decease, the profits of departed greatness ; and on the other, the whole body of the people of England, whose opinions and character are necessarily formed by the highest class of its writers, and whose national destiny and future fate is mainly dependent upon the spiritual and exalted direction of their genius.

The only argument, founded upon public considerations, which is ever adduced against these views, is founded upon the assertion that, under the monopoly produced by the copyright to the author while it lasts, the price of works is seriously enhanced to the public, and they are confined to editions of a more costly description, and that thus the benefit of the spread of knowledge among the middle and humbler classes is diminished. If this argument were well founded, it may be admitted that it would afford, to a certain degree, a counterbalancing consideration to those which have been mentioned, although no temporary or passing advantages could ever adequately compensate the evils consequent upon drying up the fountains of real intellectual greatness amongst us. But it is evident that these apprehensions are altogether chimerical, and that the clamour devised about the middle classes being deprived of the benefit of getting cheap editions of works that have become standard, is now altogether unfounded. It may be conceded that, in the former age, when the rich and the affluent alone were the purchasers of books, and education had not opened the treasures of knowledge to the middle classes, the prices of books during the copyright were in general high, and were, for the most part, suited only to the higher class of readers. Nay, it may also be admitted, that some publishers have often, by the reprint of works of a standard nature, at a cheaper rate, the moment the copyright expired, of late years materially extended the circle of their readers, and thereby conferred an important benefit on society. But nothing can be plainer than that this circumstance has taken place solely because of the introduction of the middle classes into the reading and book-purchasing public ; and experience had not yet taught authors or publishers the immense profits to be sometimes realised by adapting, during *the continuance of the copyright*, the varied classes of editions of popular works, to the different classes

of readers who have now risen into activity. But their attention is now fully awakened to this subject. Every one now sees that the greatest profit is to be realised during the copyright, for works of durable interest, by publishing editions adapted for all, *even the very humblest classes*. The proof of this is decisive. Does not Mr Campbell publish annually a new edition of the *Pleasures of Hope*, in every possible form, from the guinea edition for the duchess or countess, down to the shilling copy for the mechanic and artisan? Have not Sir Walter Scott's *Novels* been brought down, during the existence of the copyright, to an issue of the Waverley Novels, at four shillings each novel, and latterly to an issue, in numbers, at twopence a-week, avowedly for the working-classes? Moore's, Southey's, and Wordsworth's *Poems*, have all been published, by the authors or their assignees, in a duodecimo form, originally at five, but which can now be had at four, or three shillings and sixpence a volume. James's *Naval History* has already issued from the press in monthly numbers, at five shillings; and the eighth edition of Hallam's *Middle Ages* is before the public in two volumes, at a price so moderate, that it never can be made lower to those who do not wish to put out their eyes by reading closely printed double columns by candle-light. In short, authors and booksellers now perfectly understand that, as a reading and book-buying public has sprung up in all classes, it has become not only necessary, but in the highest degree profitable, to issue different editions even simultaneously from the press, at different prices, adapted to the rates at which purchasers may be inclined to buy; just as the manager of a theatre understands that it is expedient not only to have the dress-circle for the nobility and gentry, but the pit for the people of business, and the galleries for the humbler classes. No one imagines that, because the seats in the dress-circle are seven shillings, he will close the pit, which is three and sixpence, or the gallery, which is one shilling. In this age of growing wealth and intelligence in the middle and humbler classes, there is no danger of their being forgotten, if they do not forget themselves. There is more to be got out of the pit and the galleries than the dress-circle.

Thus we have argued this great question of copyright

upon its true ground—the national character, the national interests, the elevation and improvement of all classes. We disdain to argue it upon the footing of the interests of authors; we despise appeals to the humanity, even to the justice of the legislature. We have not even mentioned the names of Serjeant Talfourd and Lord Mahon, the able and eloquent supporters of the claims of authors in this particular. We tell our legislators, that those who wield the powers of thought are fully aware of the strength of the lever which they hold in their hand: they know that it governs the rulers of men; that it sways after a time the measures of Government; that it brought on the Revolution of France, and stopped the Revolution of England. The only class of writers to whom the extension of the present copyright would be of any value, are actuated by higher motives to their exertions than any worldly considerations of honour or profit; those who aspire to direct or bless mankind, are neither to be seduced by courts, nor to be won by gold. It is the national character which is really affected by the present downward tendency of our literature; it is the national interests which are really at stake; it is the final fate of the empire which is at issue in the character of our literature. True, an extension of the copyright will not affect the interests of a thousandth part of the writers, or a hundredth part of the readers in the present age; but what then?—it is they who are to form the general opinion of mankind in the next; it is upon that thousandth and that hundredth that the fate of the world depends.

THE DECLINE OF TURKEY

[BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, JUNE 1833]

THE long duration and sudden fall of the Turkish Empire is one of the most extraordinary and apparently inexplicable phenomena in European history. The decay of the Ottoman power had been the perpetual theme of historians; its approaching downfall, the unceasing subject of prophecy for a century; but yet the ancient fabric still held out, and evinced on occasions a degree of vigour which confounded all the machinations of its enemies. For eighty years the subversion of the empire of Constantinople had been the constant object of Muscovite ambition; the genius of Catherine had been perseveringly directed to that great object; a Russian prince had been christened after the last of the Palæologi expressly to receive his throne: but yet the black eagle made little progress towards the Danube; the Mussulman forces arrayed on its banks were still most formidable, and a host arrayed under the banners of the Osmanleys, seemingly capable of making head against the world. For four years, from 1808 to 1812, the Russians waged a desperate war with the Turks; they brought frequently 150,000, sometimes 200,000 men into the field; but at its close they had made no sensible progress in the reduction of the bulwarks of Islamism. Two hundred thousand Mussulmans had frequently assembled round the banners of the Prophet; the Danube had been stained with blood, but the hostile armies still contended in doubtful and desperate strife on its shores; and on the glacis of Roudschouck the Muscovites had sustained a bloodier

defeat than they ever received from the genius of Napoleon. In the triumph of the Turks at that prodigious victory, the Vizier wrote exultingly to the Grand Seignior, that such was the multitude of the Infidel heads which he had taken, that they would make a bridge for the souls of the Faithful from earth to heaven.

But though then so formidable, the Ottoman power has within these twenty years rapidly and irrecoverably declined. The great barrier of Turkey was reached in the first campaign of the next war, the Balkan yielded to Russian genius in the second, and Adrianople, the ancient capital of the Osmanleys, became celebrated for the treaty which sealed for ever the degradation of their race. On all sides the provinces of the Empire have revolted. Greece, through a long and bloody contest, has at length worked out its deliverance from all but its own passions; the ancient war-cry of Byzantium, "Victory to the Cross!" has been again heard on the Ægean Sea;* and the Pasha of Egypt, taking advantage of the weakness consequent on so many reverses, has boldly thrown off the yoke, and, advancing from Acre in the path of Napoleon, shown to the astonished world the justice of that great man's remark, that his defeat by Sir Sidney Smith under its walls made him miss his destiny. The victory of Konieh prostrated the Asiatic power of Turkey; the standards of Mehemet Ali are rapidly approaching the Seraglio; and the discomfited Sultan is driven to take refuge under the suspicious shelter of the Russian legions. Already the advanced guard of Nicholas has passed the Bosphorus; the Muscovite standards are floating at Scutari; and, to the astonishment alike of Europe and Asia, the keys of the Dardanelles, the throne of Constantine, are laid at the feet of the Czar.

The unlooked-for rapidity of these events is not more astonishing than the weakness which the Mussulmans have evinced in their last struggle. The Russians, in the late campaign, never assembled 40,000 men in the field. In the battle of the 11th June, which decided the fate of the war, Diebitsch had only 36,000 soldiers under arms; yet

* When the brave Canaris passed under the bows of the Turkish admiral's ship, to which he had grappled the fatal fireship, at Scio, the crew in his boat exclaimed "Victory to the Cross!" the old war-cry of Byzantium.—GORDON'S *Greek Revolution*, i. 274.

this small force routed the Turkish army, and laid open the far-famed passes of the Balkan to the daring genius of its leader. Christendom looked in vain for the mighty host which, at the sight of the holy banner, was wont to assemble round the standard of the Prophet; the ancient courage of the Osmanleys seemed to have perished with their waning fortunes. Hardly could the Russian outposts keep pace with them in the rapidity of their flight; and a force, reduced by sickness to 20,000 men, dictated peace to the Ottomans within twenty hours' march of Constantinople. More lately, the once dreaded throne of Turkey has become a jest to its ancient provinces. The Pasha of Egypt, formerly the most inconsiderable of its vassals, has compelled the Sublime Porte, the ancient terror of Christendom, to seek for safety in the protection of Infidel battalions; and the throne of Constantine, incapable of self-defence, is ultimately destined to become the prize for which Muscovite ambition and Arabian audacity are to contend on the glittering shores of Scutari.

But if the weakness of the Ottomans is surprising, the supineness of the European powers is not less amazing at this interesting crisis. The power of Russia has long been a subject of alarm to France, and having twice seen the Cossacks at the Tuileries, it is not surprising that they should feel somewhat nervous at every addition to its strength. England, jealous of its maritime superiority, and apprehensive—whether reasonably or not is immaterial—of danger to her Indian possessions from the growth of Russian power in Asia, has long made it a fixed principle of her policy to coerce the ambitious designs of the Cabinet of St Petersburg, and twice she has saved Turkey from their grasp. When the Russians and Austrians, in 1786, projected an alliance for its partition, and Catherine and Joseph had actually met on the Wolga to arrange its details, Mr Pitt interposed, and by the influence of England prevented the design: and when Diebitsch was in full march for Constantinople, and the insurrection of the Janissaries only waited for the sight of the Cossacks to break out, and overturn the throne of Mahmoud, the strong arm of Wellington interfered, put a curb in the mouth of Russia, and postponed for a season the fall of

the Turkish power. Now, however, everything is changed. France and England, occupied with domestic dissensions, are utterly paralysed; they can no longer make a show of resistance to Muscovite ambition. Exclusively occupied in preparing the downfall of her ancient allies, the Dutch and the Portuguese, England has not a thought to bestow on the occupation of the Dardanelles; and the keys of the Levant are, without either observation or regret, passing into the hands of Russia.

These events are so extraordinary, that they almost make the boldest speculator hold his breath. Great as is the change in external events which we daily witness, the alteration in internal feeling is still greater. Changes which would have convulsed England from end to end, dangers which would have thrown European diplomacy into agonies a few years ago, are now regarded with indifference. The progress of Russia through Asia, the capture of Erivan and Erzeroun, the occupation of the Dardanelles, are now as little regarded as if we had no interest in such changes; as if we had no empire in the East threatened by so ambitious a neighbour; no independence at stake in the growth of the Colossus of Northern Europe.

The reason is apparent, and it affords the first great and practical proof which England has yet received of the fatal blow, which the recent changes have struck, not only at her internal prosperity, but at her external independence. England is now powerless; and, what is worse, the European powers know it. Her Government is so incessantly and exclusively occupied in maintaining its ground against the internal enemies whom the Reform Bill has raised up into appalling strength; the necessity of sacrificing something to the insatiable passions of the Revolutionists is so apparent, that every other object is disregarded. The allies, by whose aid they overthrew the constitution, have turned so fiercely upon them, that they are forced to strain every nerve to resist their attacks. Who can think of the occupation of Scutari, when the malt-tax is threatened with repeal? Who care for the thunders of Nicholas, when the threats of O'Connell are ringing in their ears? The English Government, once so stable and steadfast in its resolution, when rested on the firm rock of the Aristocracy, has become

unstable as water since it was thrown for its support upon the Democracy. Its designs are as changeable, its policy as fluctuating, as the volatile and inconsiderate mass from which it sprang; and hence its menaces are disregarded, its ancient relations broken, its old allies disgusted, and the weight of its influence being no longer felt, projects the most threatening to its independence are without hesitation undertaken by other States.

Nor is the supineness and apathy of the nation less important or alarming. It exists to such an extent as clearly to demonstrate, that not only are the days of its glory numbered, but the termination even of its independence may be foreseen at no distant period. Enterprises the most hostile to its interests, conquests the most fatal to its glory, are undertaken by its rivals not only without the disapprobation, but with the cordial support, of the majority of the nation. Portugal, for a century the ally of England, for whose defence thousands of Englishmen had died in our own times, has been abandoned without a murmur to the revolutionary spoliation and propagandist arts of France. Holland, the bulwark of England, for whose protection the great war with France was undertaken, has been assailed by British fleets, and threatened by British power; and the shores of the Scheldt, which beheld the victorious legions of Wellington land to curb the power of Napoleon, have witnessed the union of the tricolor and British flags, to beat down the independence of the Dutch provinces. Constantinople, long regarded as the outpost of India against the Russians, is abandoned without regret; and, amidst the strife of internal faction, the fixing of the Muscovite standards on the shores of the Bosphorus, the surrender of the finest harbour in the world to a growing maritime power, and of the entrepot of Europe and Asia to an already formidable commercial state, is hardly the subject of observation.

The reason cannot be concealed, and is too clearly illustrative of the desperate tendency of the recent changes upon all the classes of the Empire. With the Revolutionists the passion for change has supplanted every other feeling, and the spirit of innovation has extinguished that of patriotism. They no longer league in thought, or word, or wish, exclu-

sively with their own countrymen ; they no longer regard the interests and glory of England, as the chief objects of their solicitude ; what they look to is the revolutionary party in other States ; what they sympathise with is, the progress of the tricolor in overturning other dynasties. The loss of British dominion, the loss of British colonies, the downfall of British power, the decay of British glory, the loss of British independence, is to them a matter of no sort of regret, provided the tricolor is triumphant, and the cause of revolution is making progress in the world. Well and truly did Mr Burke say, that the spirit of patriotism and Jacobinism could not coexist in the same State ; and that the greatest national disasters are lightly passed over, provided they bring with them the advance of domestic ambition.

The Conservatives, on the other hand, are so utterly desperate in regard to the future prospects of the Empire, from the vacillation and violence of the Democratic party who are installed in sovereignty, that external events, even of the most threatening character, are regarded by them but as dust in the balance, when compared with the domestic calamities which are staring us in the face. What although the ingratitude and tergiversation of England to Holland have deprived us of all respect among foreign States ? That evil, great as it is, is nothing to the domestic embarrassments which overwhelm the country from the unruly spirit which the Whigs fostered with such sedulous care during the Reform contest. What although the empire of the Mediterranean, and ultimately our Indian possessions, are menaced by the ceaseless growth of Russia ; the measures which Government have in contemplation for the management of that vast dominion, will sever it from the British Empire before any danger is felt from external foes ; and long ere the Muscovite eagles are seen on the banks of the Indus, it is probable that the insane measures of the Urban constituencies will have banished the British standards from the plains of Hindostan.

Everything, in short, announces that the external weight and foreign importance of Great Britain are lost ; and that the passing of the Reform Bill has truly been the death-warrant of the British Empire. The Russians are at Con-

stantinople!—the menaces, the entreaties of England are alike disregarded; and the ruler of the seas has submitted in two years to descend to the rank of a second-rate power. That which a hundred defeats could have hardly effected to old England, is the very first result of the innovating system upon which new England has entered. The Russians are at Constantinople! How would the shade of Chatham, or Pitt, or Fox thrill at the announcement! But it makes no sort of impression on the English people: as little as the robbery of the Portuguese fleet by the French, or the surrender of the citadel of Antwerp to the son-in-law of Louis-Philippe. In this country we have arrived, in an inconceivably short space of time, at that weakness, disunion, and indifference to all but revolutionary objects, which is at once the forerunner and the cause of national ruin.

But leaving these mournful topics, it is more instructive to turn to the causes which have precipitated, in so short a space of time, the fall of the Turkish Empire. Few more curious or extraordinary phenomena are to be met with in the page of history. It will be found that the Ottomans have fallen a victim to the same passion for innovation and reform which has proved so ruinous both in this and a neighbouring country; and that, while the bulwarks of Turkey were thrown down by the rude hand of Mahmoud, the States of Western Europe were disabled, by the same frantic course, from rendering him any effectual aid. How well in every age has the spirit of Jacobinism and revolutionary passion aided the march and hastened the growth of Russia!

The fact of the long duration of Turkey, in the midst of the monarchies of Europe, and the stubborn resistance which she opposed for a series of ages to the attacks of the two greatest of its military powers, is of itself sufficient to demonstrate that the accounts on which we had been accustomed to rely of the condition of the Ottoman Empire were partial or exaggerated. No fact is so universally demonstrated by history as the rapid and irrecoverable decline of barbarous powers, when the career of conquest is once terminated. Where is now the Empire of the Caliphs or the Moors? What has survived of the conquests, one hundred years ago, of Nadir Shah? How long did the

Empire of Aurengzebe, the throne of the Great Mogul, resist the attacks of England, even at the distance of eight thousand miles from the parent state? How then did it happen that Turkey so long resisted the spoiler? What conservative principle has enabled the Osmanleys so long to avoid the degradation which so rapidly overtakes all barbarous and despotic empires; and what has communicated to their vast empire a portion of the undecaying vigour which has hitherto been considered as the grand characteristic of European civilisation? The answer to these questions will unfold the real causes both of the long endurance, and of the ultimately sudden fall, of the Turkish Empire.

Though the Osmanleys were an Asiatic power, and ruled entirely on the principles of Asiatic despotism, yet their conquests were effected in Europe, or in those parts of Asia in which, from the influence of the Crusades, or of the Roman institutions which survived their invasion, a certain degree of European civilisation remained. It is difficult utterly to exterminate the institutions of a country where they have been long established; those of the Christian provinces of the Roman Empire have in part survived all the dreadful tempests which for the last six centuries have passed over their surface. It is these remnants of civilisation; it is the institutions which still linger among the vanquished people, which have so long preserved the Turkish provinces from decay; and it is these ancient bulwarks, which the innovating passions of Mahmoud have now destroyed.

1. The first circumstance which upheld, amidst its numerous defects, the Ottoman Empire, was the rights conceded on the first conquest of the country by Mahomet to the *Dere beys* or ancient nobles of Asia Minor, and which the succeeding Sultans have been careful to maintain inviolate. These *Dere beys* all entered into capitulation with the conqueror, and obtained the important privileges of retaining their lands in perpetuity for their descendants, and of paying a *fixed tribute* in money and men to the Sultan. In other words, they were a hereditary nobility; and as they constituted the great strength of the empire in its Asiatic provinces, they have preserved their privilege through all succeeding

reigns. The following is the description given of them by the intelligent traveller the title of whose work is prefixed to this essay :—

“The Dere beys,” says Mr Slade, “literally Lords of the Valleys,—an expression peculiarly adapted to the country, which presents a series of oval valleys, surrounded by ramparts of hills,—were the original possessors of those parts of Asia Minor which submitted, under feudal conditions, to the Ottomans. Between the conquest of Brussa and the conquest of Constantinople, a lapse of more than a century, chequered by the episode of Tamerlane, their faith was precarious; but after the latter event, Mahomet II. bound their submission, and finally settled the terms of their existence. He confirmed them in their lands, subject, however, to tribute, and to quotas of troops in war; and he absolved the head of each family for ever from personal service. The last clause was the most important, as thereby the Sultan had no power over their lives, nor, consequently, could be their heirs, that despotic power being lawful over those only in the actual service of the Porte. The families of the Dere beys, therefore, became neither impoverished nor extinct. It would be dealing in truisms to enumerate the advantages enjoyed by the districts of these noblemen over the rest of the empire. They were oases in the desert; their owners had more than a life-interest in the soil; they were born and lived among the people; and, being hereditarily rich, had no occasion to create a private fortune, each year, after the tribute due was levied. Whereas, in a pashalic, the people are strained every year to double or treble the amount of the impost, since the pasha, who pays for his situation, must also be enriched. The devotion of the dependents of the Dere beys was great; at a whistle, the Car’osman-Oglous, the Tchapan-Oglous, the Ellezar-Oglous, (the principal Asiatic families that survive,) could raise, each, from ten thousand to twenty thousand horsemen, and equip them. Hence the facility with which the Sultans, up to the present century, drew such large bodies of cavalry into the field. The Dere beys have always furnished, and maintained, the greatest part; and there is not one instance, since the conquest of Constantinople, of one of these great families raising the standard of revolt. The pashas invariably have. The reasons, respectively, are obvious. The Dere bey was sure of keeping his possessions by right; the pasha of losing his by custom, unless he had money to bribe the Porte, or force to intimidate it.

“These provincial nobles, whose rights had been respected during four centuries, by a series of twenty-four sovereigns, had two crimes in the eyes of Mahmoud II. : they held their property from their ancestors, and they had riches. To alter the tenure of the former, the destination of the latter, was his object. The Dere beys, unlike the seraglio dependents brought up to distrust their own shadows, had no cause for suspicion, and therefore became easy dupes of the grossest treachery. The unbending spirits were removed to another world; the flexible were despoiled of their wealth. Some few await their turn, or, their eyes opened, prepare to resist oppression. Car’osman-Oglou, for example, was summoned to Constantinople, where expensive employments, forced on him during several years, reduced his ready cash; while a follower of the seraglio resided at his city of Magnesia, to collect his revenues. His peasants, in consequence, ceased to cultivate their lands, from whence they no longer hoped to reap profit; and his once flourishing possessions soon became as desolate as any which had always been under the gripe of pashas.”

This passage throws the strongest light on the former condition of the Turkish Empire. They possessed a *here-*

ditary nobility in their Asiatic provinces ; a body of men whose interests were lasting ; who enjoyed their rights by succession, and, therefore, were permanently interested in preserving their possessions from spoliation. It was their feudal tenantry who flocked in such multitudes to the standard of Mahomet when any great crisis occurred, and formed those vast armies which so often astonished the European powers, and struck terror into the boldest hearts in Christendom. These hereditary nobles, the bones of the empire, whose estates were exempt from the tyranny of the Pashas, have been destroyed by Mahmoud. Hence the disaffection of the Asiatic provinces, and the readiness with which they opened their arms to the liberating standards of Mehemet Ali. It is the nature of innovation, whether enforced by the despotism of a sultan or of a democracy, to destroy in its fervour the institutions on which public freedom is founded.

2. The next circumstance which contributed to mitigate the severity of Ottoman oppression, was the privileges of the provincial cities, chiefly in Europe, which consisted in their being governed by magistrates elected by the people themselves from among their chief citizens. This privilege, a relic of the rights of the *Municipia* over the whole Roman Empire, was established in all the great towns ; and its importance in moderating the otherwise intolerable weight of Ottoman oppression was incalculable. The Pashas, or temporary rulers appointed by the Sultan, had no authority, or only a partial one, in these free cities, and hence they formed nearly as complete an asylum for industry in Europe as the estates of the Dere beys did in Asia. This important right, however, could not escape the reforming passion of Mahmoud ; and it was accordingly overturned.

“ In conjunction with subverting the Dere beys, Mahmoud attacked the privileges of the great provincial cities, (principally in Europe,) which consisted in the election of ayans (magistrates) by the people, from among the notables. Some cities were solely governed by them, and in those ruled by pashas, they had, in most cases, sufficient influence to restrain somewhat the full career of despotism. They were the protectors of rayas, as well as of Mussulmans, and, for their own sakes, resisted exorbitant imposts. The change in the cities where their authority has been abolished (Adrianople, *e. g.*) is deplorable ; trade has since languished, and population has diminished. They were instituted by Solyman (the lawgiver), and the protection which they have invariably afforded the Christian subjects of the Porte, entitles them to a Christian’s good word. Their crime, that of the

Dere beys, was being possessed of authority not emanating from the Sultan.

“Had Mahmoud II. intrusted the government of the provinces to the Dere beys, and strengthened the authority of the ayans, he would have truly reformed his empire, by restoring it to its brightest state, have gained the love of his subjects, and the applauses of humanity. By the contrary proceeding, subverting two bulwarks (though dilapidated) of national prosperity—a provincial nobility and magistracy—he has shown himself a selfish tyrant.”

3. In addition to a hereditary nobility in the Dere beys, and the privileges of corporations in the right of electing their ayans, the Mussulmans possessed a powerful hierarchy in the *ulema*, a most important body in the Ottoman dominions, and whose privileges have gone far to limit the power of its despotic government. This important institution has been little understood hitherto in Europe; but it has contributed in a most important manner to mitigate the severity of the Sultan toward those classes who enjoyed no special protection.

“In each of the Turkish cities,” says Mr Slade, “reside a muphti and a mollah. A knowledge of Arabic, so as to be able to read the Koran in the original, is considered sufficient for the former, but the latter must have run a legal career in one of the medressehs, (universities of Constantinople.) After thirty years’ probation in a medresseh, the student becomes of the class of muderis, (doctors at law,) from which are chosen the mollahs, comprehended under the name of ulema. Students who accept the inferior judicial appointments can never become of the ulema.

“The ulema is divided into three classes, according to a scale of the cities of the empire. The first class consists of the caziaskers, (chief judges of Europe and Asia;) the Stamboul effendisi, (mayor of Constantinople;) the mollahs qualified to act at Mecca, at Medina, at Jerusalem, at Bagdat, at Salonica, at Aleppo, at Damascus, at Brussa, at Cairo, at Smyrna, at Cogni, at Galata, at Scutari. The second class consists of the mollahs qualified to act at the twelve cities of next importance. The third class at ten inferior cities. The administration of minor towns is intrusted to cadis, who are nominated by the caziaskers in their respective jurisdictions, a patronage which produces great wealth to these two officers.

“In consequence of these powers, the mollah of a city may prove as great a pest as a needy pasha; but as the mollahs are hereditarily wealthy, they are generally moderate in their perquisitions, and often protect the people against the extortions of the pashas. The cadis, however, of the minor towns, who have not the advantages of being privately rich, seldom fail to join with the aga to skin the ‘serpent that crawls in the dust.’

“The mollahs, dating from the reign of Solyman—zenith of Ottoman prosperity—were not slow in discovering the value of their situations, or in taking advantage of them; and as their sanctity protected them from spoliation, they were enabled to leave their riches to their children, who were brought up to the same career, and were, by privilege, allowed to finish their studies at the medresseh in eight years less time than the prescribed number of years, the private tuition which they were supposed to receive from their fathers making up for the deficiency. Thus, besides the influence of birth and wealth, they had a direct facility in attaining the degree of muderis, which their fellow-citizens and rivals had not, and who were obliged, in consequence, to accept inferior judicial appointments. In

process of time, the whole monopoly of the ulema centred in a certain number of families ; and their constant residence at the capital, to which they return at the expiration of their term of office, has maintained their power to the present day. Nevertheless, it is true that if a student of a medresseh, not of the privileged order, possess extraordinary merit, the ulema has generally the tact to admit him of the body : woe to the cities to which he goes as mollah, since he has to create a private fortune for his family. Thus arose that body, the peerage of Turkey, known by the name of ulema, a body uniting the high attributes of law and religion ; distinct from the clergy, yet enjoying all the advantages connected with a church paramount ; free from its shackles, yet retaining the perfect odour of sanctity. Its combination has given it a greater hold in the state than the Dere beys, who, though possessed individually of more power, founded too on original charters, sank from a want of union."

The great effect of the ulema has arisen from this, that its lands are safe from confiscation or arbitrary taxation. To power of every sort, excepting that of a triumphant democracy, there must be some limits ; and great as the authority of the Sultan is, he is too dependent on the religious feelings of his subjects to be able to overturn the church. The consequence is, that the *vacouf* or church lands have been always free both from arbitrary taxation and confiscation ; and hence they have formed a species of mortmain or entailed lands in the Ottoman dominions, enjoying privileges to which the other parts of the empire, excepting the estates of the Dere beys, are entire strangers. Great part of the lands of Turkey, in many places amounting to one-third of the whole, were held by this religious tenure ; and the device was frequently adopted of leaving property to the ulema in trust for particular families, whereby the benefits of secure hereditary descent were obtained. The practical advantages of this ecclesiastical property are thus enumerated by Mr Slade:—

"The *vacouf* (mosque lands) have been among the best cultivated in Turkey, by being *free from arbitrary taxation*. The mektebs (public schools) in all the great cities, where the rudiments of the Turkish language and the Koran are taught, and where poor scholars receive food gratis, are supported by the ulema. The medressehs, imarets, (hospitals,) fountains, &c., are all maintained by the ulema ; add to these the magnificence of the mosques, their number, the royal sepultures, and it will be seen that Turkey owes much to the existence of this body, which has been enabled, by its power and its union, to resist royal cupidity. Without it, where would be the establishments above mentioned ? Religious property has been an object of attack in every country. At one period, by the sovereign, to increase his power ; at another, by the people, to build fortunes on its downfall. Mahomet IV., after the disastrous retreat of his grand vizier, Cara Mustapha, from before Vienna, 1683, seized on the riches of the principal mosques, which arbitrary act led to his deposition. The ulema would have shown a noble patriotism in giving its wealth for the service of the state,

but it was right in resenting the extortion, which would have served as a precedent for succeeding sultans. In fine, rapid as has been the decline of the Ottoman empire since victory ceased to attend its arms, I venture to assert, that it would have been *tenfold more rapid but for the privileged orders*—the Dere beys and the Ulema. Without their powerful weight and influence—effect of hereditary wealth and sanctity—the Janissaries would long since have cut Turkey in slices, and have ruled it as the Mamelukes ruled Egypt.

“Suppose, now, the influence of the ulema to be overturned, what would be the consequence? The mollaships, like the pashalics, would then be sold to the highest bidders, or given to the needy followers of the seraglio. These must borrow money of the bankers for their outfit, which must be repaid, and their own purses lined, by their talents at extortion.”

It is one of the most singular proofs of the tendency of innovation to blind its votaries to the effects of the measures it advocates, that the ulema has long been singled out for destruction by the reforming Sultan, and the change is warmly supported by many of the inconsiderate Franks who dwell in the East. Such is the aversion of men of every faith to the vesting of property or influence in the church, that they would willingly see this one of the last barriers which exist against arbitrary power done away. The power of the Sultan, great as it is, has not yet ventured on this prodigious innovation; but it is well known that he meditates it, and it is the knowledge of this circumstance which is one great cause of the extreme unpopularity which has rendered his government unable to obtain any considerable resources from his immense dominions.

4. In every part of the empire, the superior felicity and wellbeing of the peasantry in the mountains is conspicuous, and has long attracted the attention of travellers. Clarke observed it in the mountains of Greece; Mariti and others, in Syria and Asia Minor; and Mr Slade and Mr Walsh, in the Balkan, and the hilly country of Bulgaria. “No peasantry in the world,” says the former, “are so well off as that of Bulgaria. The lowest of them has abundance of everything—meat, poultry, eggs, milk, rice, cheese, wine, bread, good clothing, a warm dwelling, and a horse to ride. It is true he has no newspaper to kindle his passions, nor a knife and fork to eat with, nor a bedstead to lie on; but these are the customs of the country, and a pasha is equally unhappy. Where, then, is the tyranny under which the Christian subjects of the Porte are generally supposed to groan? Not among the Bulgarians certainly. I wish that in every

country a traveller could pass from one end to the other, and find a good supper and a warm fire in every cottage, as he can in this part of European Turkey.”* This description applies generally to almost all the mountainous provinces of the Ottoman Empire, and in an especial manner to the peasants of Parnassus and Olympia, as described by Clarke. As a contrast to this delightful state of society, we may quote the same traveller’s account of the plains of Romelia. “Romelia, if cultivated, would become the granary of the East, whereas Constantinople depends on Odessa for daily bread. The burial-grounds, choked with weeds and underwood, constantly occurring in every traveller’s route, far remote from habitations, are eloquent testimonials of continued depopulation. The living, too, are far apart; a town every fifty miles, and a village every ten miles, is close, and horsemen meeting on the highway regard each other as objects of curiosity. The cause of this depopulation is to be found in the pernicious government of the Ottomans.”† The cause of this remarkable difference lies in the fact, that the Ottoman oppression has never yet fully extended into the mountainous parts of its dominions; and, consequently, they remained like permanent veins of prosperity, intersecting the country in every direction, amidst the desolation which generally prevailed in the pashalics of the plain.

5. The Janissaries were another institution which upheld the Turkish Empire. They formed a regular standing army, who, although at times extremely formidable to the Sultan, and exercising their influence with all the haughtiness of Prætorian guards, were yet of essential service in repelling the invasion of the Christian powers. The strength of the Ottoman armies consisted in the Janissaries, and the *delhis* and *spahis*; the former being the regular force, the latter the contingents of the *Dere beys*. Every battle-field, from Constantinople to Vienna, can tell of the valour of the Janissaries, long and justly regarded as the bulwark of the empire; and the Russian battalions, with all their firmness, were frequently broken, even in the last war, by the desperate charge of the *delhis*. Now, however, both are destroyed. The vigorous severity of the Sultan has annihilated the dreaded battalions of the former, the ruin of the

* *Slade*, ii. 97.

† *Ibid*, 15.

Dere beys has closed the supply of the latter. In these violent and impolitic reforms is to be found the immediate cause of the destruction of the Turkish Empire.

Of the revolt which led to the destruction of this great body, and the policy which led to it, the following striking account is given by Mr Slade :—

“ Every campaign during the Greek war, a body was embarked on board the fleet, and landed in small parties, purposely unsupported, on the theatre of war : none returned, so that only a few thousand remained at Constantinople, when, May 30, 1826, the Sultan issued a *hatti scheriff* concerning the formation of ‘ a new victorious army.’ This was a flash of lightning in the eyes of the Janissaries. They saw why their companions did not return from Greece ; they saw that the old, hitherto abortive policy, dormant since eighteen years, was revived ; they saw that their existence was threatened ; and they resolved to resist, confiding in the prestige of their name. June 15, following, they reversed their soup-kettles, (signal of revolt,) demanded the heads of the ministers, and the revocation of the said firman. But Mahmoud was prepared for them. Husseyin, the aga of the Janissaries, was in his interests, and with him the *yamaks*, (garrisons of the castles of the Bosphorus,) the *Galiondgis*, and the *Topchis*. Collecting, therefore, on the following morning, his forces in the *Atmeidan*, the sand-jack *scherriff* was displayed, and the *ulema* seconded him by calling on the people to support their sovereign against the rebels. Still, noways daunted, the Janissaries advanced, and summoned their aga, of whom they had no suspicion, to repeat their demands to the Sultan, threatening, in case of non-compliance, to force the *seraglio* gates. Husseyin, who had acted his part admirably, and with consummate duplicity, brought them to the desired point—open rebellion—flattering them with success, now threw aside the mask. He stigmatised them as infidels, and called on them in the name of the prophet to submit to the Sultan’s clemency. At this defection of their trusted favourite chief, their smothered rage burst out ; they rushed to his house, razed it in a moment, did the same by the houses of the other ministers, applied torches, and in half-an-hour Constantinople streamed with blood beneath the glare of flames. Mahmoud hesitated, and was about to conciliate ; but Husseyin repulsed the idea with firmness, knowing that to effect conciliation his head must be the first offering. ‘ Now or never,’ he replied to the Sultan, ‘ is the time ! Think not that a few heads will appease this sedition, which has been too carefully fomented by me,—the wrongs of the Janissaries too closely dwelt on, thy character too blackly stained, thy treachery too minutely dissected,—to be easily laid. Remember that this is the second time that thy arm has been raised against them, and they will not trust thee again. Remember, too, that thou hast now a son ; that son not in thy power, whom they will elevate on thy downfall. Now is the time ! This evening’s sun must set for the last time on them or us. Retire from the city, that thy sacred person may be safe, and leave the rest to me.’ Mahmoud consented, and went to *Dolma Bachtche*, (a palace one mile up the Bosphorus,) to await the result. Husseyin, then free to act without fear of interruption, headed his *yamaks*, and vigorously attacked the rebels, who, cowardly as they were insolent, offered a feeble resistance, when they found themselves unsupported by the mob, retreated from street to street, and finally took refuge in the *Atmeidan*. Here their career ended. A masked battery on the hill beyond opened on them, troops enclosed them in, and fire was applied to the wooden buildings. Desperation then gave them the courage that might have saved them at first, and they strove with madness to force a passage from the burning pile ; part were consumed,

part cut down ; a few only got out, among them five colonels, who threw themselves at the aga's feet, and implored grace. They spoke their last."

Five thousand fell under this grand blow ; twenty-five thousand perished throughout the whole empire. The next day a hattı scheriff was read in the mosques, declaring the Janissaries infamous, the order abolished, and the name an anathema.

This great stroke made a prodigious sensation in Europe, and even the best informed were deceived as to its effects on the future prospects of the Ottoman Empire. By many it was compared to the destruction of the Strelitzes by Peter the Great, and the resurrection of Turkey anticipated from the great reform of Mahmoud, as Muscovy arose from the vigorous measures of the Czar. But the cases and the men were totally different. Peter, though a despot, was practically acquainted with his country. He had voluntarily descended to the humblest rank, to make himself master of the arts of life. When he had destroyed the Prætorian guards of Moscow, he built up the new military force of the empire, in strict accordance with its national and religious feelings, and the victory of Pultowa was the consequence. But what did Sultan Mahmoud ? Having destroyed the old military force of Turkey, he subjected the new levies which were to replace it to such absurd regulations, and so thoroughly violated the political and religious feelings of the country, that none of the Osmanleys who could possibly avoid it would enter his ranks, and he was obliged to fill them up with mere boys, who had not yet acquired any determinate feelings ; a wretched substitute for the old military force of the empire, and which proved totally unequal to the task of facing the veteran troops of Russia. The impolicy of his conduct in destroying and rebuilding is more clearly evinced by nothing than the contrast it affords to the conduct of Sultan Amurath, in originally forming these guards.

"Strikingly," says Mr Slade, "does the conduct of Mahmoud, in forming the new levies, contrast with that of Amurath in the formation of the Janissaries ; the measures being parallel, inasmuch as each was a mighty innovation, no less than the establishment of an entire new military force, on the institutions of the country. But Amurath had a master mind. Instead of keeping his new army distinct from the nation, he incorporated it with it, made it conform in all respects to national usages ; and the success was soon apparent by its spreading into a vast national guard, of which, in later

times, some thousands usurped the permanence of enrolment, in which the remainder, through indolence, acquiesced. Having destroyed these self-constituted battalions, Mahmoud should have made the others available, instead of outlawing them, as it were; and, by respecting their traditional whims and social rights, he would easily have given his subjects a taste for European discipline. They never objected to it in principle, but their untutored minds could not understand why, in order to use the musket and bayonet, and manœuvre together, it was necessary to leave off wearing beards and turbans.

“ But Mahmoud, in his hatred, wished to condemn them to oblivion; to eradicate every token of their pre-existence, not knowing that trampling on a grovelling party is the surest way of giving it fresh spirit; and trampling on the principles of the party in question was trampling on the principles of the whole nation. In his ideas, the Oriental usages in eating, dressing, &c. were connected with the Janissaries; had been invented by them; and therefore he proscribed them, prescribing new modes. He changed the costume of his court from Asiatic to European; he ordered his soldiers to shave their beards, recommending his courtiers to follow the same example; and he forbade the turban—that valued, darling, beautiful head-dress, at once national and religious. His folly therein cannot be sufficiently reprobated: had he reflected that Janissarism was only a branch grafted on a wide-spreading tree, that it sprang from the Turkish nation, not the Turkish nation from it, he would have seen how impossible was the more than Herculean task he assumed, of suddenly transforming national manners consecrated by centuries; a task from which his Prophet would have shrunk. The disgust excited by these sumptuary laws may be conceived. Good Mussulmans declared them unholy and scandalous, and the Asiatics, to a man, refused obedience; but as Mahmoud’s horizon was confined to his court, he did not know but what his edicts were received with veneration.

“ If Mahmoud had stopped at these follies in the exercise of his newly-acquired despotic power, it would have been well. His next step was to increase the duty on all provisions in Constantinople, and in the great provincial cities, to the great discontent of the lower classes, which was expressed by firing the city to such an extent that in the first three months six thousand houses were consumed. The end of October 1826 was also marked by a general opposition to the new imposts; but repeated executions at length brought the people to their senses, and made them regret the loss of the Janissaries, who had been their protectors as well as tormentors, inasmuch as they had never allowed the price of provisions to be raised. These disturbances exasperated the Sultan. He did not attribute them to the right cause, distress, but to a perverse spirit of Janissarism, a suspicion of harbouring which was death to any one. He farther extended his financial operations by raising the *miri* (land-tax) all over the empire, and, in ensuing years, by granting monopolies on all articles of commerce to the highest bidder. In consequence, lands, which had produced abundance, in 1830 lay waste. Articles of export—as opium, silk, &c.—gave the growers a handsome revenue when they could sell them to the Frank merchants; but at the low prices fixed by the monopolists, they lose, and the cultivation languishes. Sultan Mahmoud kills the goose for the eggs. In a word, he adopted in full the policy of Mehemet Ali, which supposed the essence of civilisation and of political science to be contained in the word *taxation*; and having driven his chariot over the necks of the *Dere* beys and of the Janissaries, he resolved to tie his subjects to its wheels, and to keep them in dire slavery. Hence a mute struggle began throughout the empire between the Sultan and the Turks, the former trying to reduce the latter to the condition of the Egyptian fellahs, the latter unwilling to imitate the fellahs in patient submission. The Sultan flatters himself (1830) that he is succeeding, because the taxes he imposed, and the monopolies he has granted, produce

him more revenue than he had formerly. The people, although hitherto they have been able to answer the additional demands by opening their hoards, evince a sullen determination not to continue doing so, by seceding gradually from their occupations, and barely existing. The result must be, if the Sultan cannot compel them to work, as the Egyptians, under the lashes of task-masters, either a complete stagnation of agriculture and trade, ever at a low ebb in Turkey, or a general rebellion, produced by misery."

The result of these precipitate and monstrous innovations strikingly appeared in the next war with Russia. The Janissaries and Dere beys were destroyed—the Mussulmans everywhere disgusted: the turban, the national dress—the scimitar, the national weapon, were laid aside in the army; and instead of the fierce and valiant Janissaries wielding that dreaded weapon, there was to be found only in the army boys of sixteen, wearing caps in the European style, and looked upon as little better than heretics by all true believers.

"Instead of the Janissaries," says Mr Slade, "the Sultan reviewed for our amusement, on the plains of Ramis Tchiftlik, his regular troops, which were quartered in and about Constantinople, amounting to about 4500 foot, and 600 horse; though, beyond being dressed and armed uniformly, scarcely meriting the name of soldiers. What a sight for Count Orloff, then ambassador-extraordinary, filling the streets of Pera with his Cossacks and Circassians! The Count, whom the Sultan often amused with a similar exhibition of his weakness, used to say, in reference to the movements of these successors of the Janissaries, that *the cavalry were employed in holding on, the infantry knew a little, and the artillery galloped about as though belonging to no party*. Yet over such troops do the Russians boast of having gained victories! In no one thing did Sultan Mahmoud make a greater mistake than in changing the mode of mounting the Turkish cavalry, which before had perfect seats, with perfect command over their horses, and only required a little order to transform the best irregular horse in the world into the best regular horse. But Mahmoud, in all his changes, took the mask for the man—the rind for the fruit. European cavalry rode flat saddles with long stirrups, therefore he thought it necessary that his cavalry should do the same. European infantry wore tight jackets and close caps, therefore the same. Were this blind adoption of forms only useless, or productive only of physical inconvenience, patience; but it proved a moral evil, creating unbounded disgust. The privation of the turban particularly affected the soldiers; first, on the feeling of insecurity about the head with a fez on; secondly, as being opposed to the love of dress, which a military life more than any other engenders."

"Mahmoud," says the same author, "will learn, that, in having attacked the customs of his nation,—customs descended to it from Abraham, and respected by Mohammed,—he has directly undermined the divine right of his family, that right being only so considered by custom,—by its harmonising with all other cherished usages. He will learn, that in having wantonly trampled on the unwritten laws of the land—those traditionary rights which were as universal household gods—he has put arms in the hands of the disaffected which no rebel has hitherto had. Neither Ali Pasha, nor Passwan Oglou, could have appealed to the fanaticism of the Turks to oppose the Sultan. Mehemet Ali can and will. Ten years ago, the idea even of another

than the house of Othman reigning over Turkey would have been heresy : the question is now openly broached, simply because the house of Othman is separating itself from the nation which raised and supported it. Reason may change the established habits of an old people ; despotism rarely can."

How completely has the event, both in the Russian and Egyptian wars, demonstrated the truth of these principles ! In the contest in Asia Minor, Paskewitch hardly encountered any opposition. Rage at the destruction of the Janisseries, among their numerous adherents ; indignation among the old population, in consequence of the ruin of the Dere beys and the suppression of the rights of the cities ; lukewarmness in the church, from the anticipated innovations in its constitution ; general dissatisfaction among all classes of Mahometans, in consequence of the change in the national dress and customs,—had so completely weakened the feeling of patriotism and the Sultan's authority, that the elements of resistance did not exist. The battles were mere parades ; the sieges little more than the summoning of fortresses to surrender. In Europe, the ruinous effects of the innovations were also painfully apparent. Though the Russians had to cross, in a dry and parched season, the pathless and waterless plains of Bulgaria ; and though, in consequence of the unhealthiness of the climate and the wretched arrangements of their commissariat, they lost 200,000 men by sickness and famine in the first campaign, yet the Ottomans, though fighting in their own country, and for their hearths, were unable to gain any decisive advantage ; and in the next campaign, when the assailants were conducted with more skill, and the possession of Varna gave them the advantage of a sea-port for their supplies, the weakness of the Turks was at once apparent. In the battle of the 11th June, the loss of the Turks did not exceed 4000 men ; the forces on neither side amounted to 40,000 men ; and yet this defeat proved fatal to the empire. Of this battle, our author gives the following characteristic and graphic account:—

"In this position, on the west side of the Koulevscha hills, Diebitsch found himself at daylight, June 11th, with 36,000 men and 100 pieces of cannon. He disposed them so as to deceive the enemy. He posted a division in the valley, its right leaning on the cliff, its left supported by redoubts ; the remainder of his troops he drew up behind the hills, so as to be unseen from the ravine ; and then, with a well-grounded hope that not a Turk would escape him, waited the Grand Vizier, who was advancing up the defile totally unconscious that Diebitsch was in any other place than before Silistria. He had broke up from Pravodi the day before, on the receipt of his

despatch from Schumla, and was followed by the Russian garrison, which had been reinforced by a regiment of hussars; but the general commanding it, instead of obeying Diebitsch's orders, and quietly tracking him until the battle should have commenced, harassed his rear. To halt and drive him back to Pravodi, caused the vizier a delay of four hours, without which he would have emerged from the defile the same evening, and have gained Schumla before Diebitsch got into position.

"In the course of the night, the vizier was informed that the enemy had taken post between him and Schumla, and threatened his retreat. He might still have avoided the issue of a battle, by making his way transversely across the defiles to the Kamptchik, sacrificing his baggage and cannon; but deeming that he had only Roth to deal with, he, as in that case was his duty, prepared to force a passage, and the few troops that he saw drawn up in the valley, on gaining the little wood fringing it, in the morning, confirmed his opinion. He counted on success; yet, to make more sure, halted to let his artillery take up a flanking position on the north side of the valley. The circuitous and bad route, however, delaying this manœuvre, he could not restrain the impatience of the delhis. Towards noon, 'Allah, allah her!' they made a splendid charge; they repeated it, broke two squares, and amused themselves nearly two hours in carving the Russian infantry, their own infantry the while admiring them from the skirts of the wood. Diebitsch, expecting every moment that the vizier would advance to complete the success of his cavalry—thereby sealing his own destruction—ordered Count Pahlen, whose division was in the valley, and who demanded reinforcements, to maintain his ground to the last man. The Count obeyed, though suffering cruelly; but the vizier, fortunately, instead of seconding his adversary's intentions, quietly remained on the eminence, enjoying the gallantry of his delhis, and waiting till his artillery should be able to open, when he might descend and claim the victory with ease. Another ten minutes would have sufficed to envelop him; but Diebitsch, ignorant of the cause of his backwardness, supposing that he intended amusing him till night, whereby to effect a retreat, and unwilling to lose more men, suddenly displayed his whole force, and opened a tremendous fire on the astonished Turks. In an instant the rout was general, horse and foot; the latter threw away their arms, and many of the Nizam Dgeditt were seen clinging to the tails of the delhis' horses, as they clambered over the hills. So complete and instantaneous was the flight, that scarcely a prisoner was made. Redschild strove to check the panic by personal valour, but in vain. He was compelled to draw his sabre in self-defence: he fled to the Kamptchik, accompanied by a score of personal retainers, crossed the mountains, and on the fourth day re-entered Schumla.

"This eventful battle, fought by the cavalry on one side, and a few thousand infantry on the other, decided the fate of Turkey: immense in its consequences compared with the trifling loss sustained, amounting, on the side of the Russians, to 3000 killed and wounded; on that of the Turks, killed, wounded, and prisoners, to about 4000. Its effect, however, was the same as though the whole Turkish army had been slain."

We have given at large the striking account of this battle, because it exhibits in the clearest point of view the extraordinary weakness to which a power was suddenly reduced which once kept all Christendom in awe. Thirty-six thousand men and a hundred pieces of cannon decided the fate of Turkey; and an army of Ottomans, forty thousand strong, after sustaining a loss of four thousand men, was

literally annihilated. The thing almost exceeds belief. To such a state of weakness had the reforms of Sultan Mahmoud so soon reduced the Ottoman power. Such was the prostration, through innovation, of an empire which, only twenty years before, had waged a bloody and doubtful war with Russia, and maintained for four campaigns one hundred and fifty thousand men on the Danube.

6. Among the immediate and most powerful causes of the rapid fall of the Ottoman Empire, unquestionably must be reckoned the Greek Revolution, and the extraordinary part which Great Britain took in destroying the Turkish navy at Navarino.

On this subject we wish to speak with caution. We have the most heartfelt wish for the triumph of the Cross over the Crescent, and the liberation of the cradle of civilisation from Asiatic bondage. But with every desire for the real welfare of the Greeks, we must be permitted to doubt whether the Revolution was the way to effect it, or whether the cause of humanity has not been retarded by the premature effort for its independence.

Since the wars of the French Revolution began, the condition and resources of the Greeks had improved in as rapid a progression as those of the Turks have declined. Various causes have contributed to this.

“The islanders,” says Mr Slade, “it may be said, have always been independent, and in possession of the coasting trade of the empire. The wars attendant on the French Revolution gave them the carrying trade of the Mediterranean; on the Euxine alone they had above two hundred sail under the Russian flag. Their vessels even navigated as far as England. Mercantile houses were established in the principal ports of the continent of Europe; the only duty on their commerce was five per cent *ad valorem*, to the Sultan’s custom-houses. The great demand of the English merchants for Turkish silk, when Italian silk, to which it is superior, was difficult to procure, enriched the Greeks of the interior, who engrossed the entire culture. The continental system obliged us to turn to Turkey for corn, large quantities of which were exported from Macedonia, from Smyrna, and from Tarsus, to the equal profit of the Grecian and Turkish agriculturists. The same system also rendered it incumbent on Germany to cultivate commercial relations with Turkey, to the great advantage of the Greeks, who were to be seen, in consequence, numerously frequenting the fairs at Leipsic. Colleges were established over Greece and the islands, by leave obtained from Selim III.; principally at Smyrna, Scio, Salonica, Yanina, and Hydra, and the wealthy sent their children to civilised Europe for education, without opposition from the Porte, which did not foresee the mischief that it would thereby gather.

“In short, the position of the Greeks in 1810 was such as would have been considered visionary twenty years previous, and would, if then offered

to them, have been hailed as the completion of their desires. But the general rule, applicable to nations as well as to individuals, that an object, however ardently aspired after, when attained, is chiefly valued as a stepping-stone to higher objects, naturally affected them: the possession of unexpected prosperity and knowledge opened to them further prospects, gave them hopes of realising golden dreams, of revenging treasured wrongs—showed them, in a word, the vista of independence."

These causes fostered the Greek Insurrection, which was secretly organised for years before it broke out in 1821, and was then spread universally and rendered unquenchable by the barbarous murder of the Greek patriarch, and a large proportion of the clergy at Constantinople, on Easter Day of that year. The result has been, that Greece, after seven years of the ordeal of fire and sword, has obtained its independence; and by the destruction of her navy at Navarino, Turkey has lost the means of making any effectual resistance on the Black Sea to Russia. Whether Greece has been benefited by the change, time alone can show. But it is certain that such have been the distractions, jealousies, and robberies of the Greeks among themselves since that time, that numbers of them have regretted that the dominion of their country has passed from the infidels.

But whatever may be thought on this subject, nothing can be more obvious than that the Greek Revolution was utterly fatal to the naval power of Turkey; because it deprived them at once of the class from which alone sailors could be obtained. The whole commerce of the Ottomans was carried on by the Greeks, and by them were all the seamen of their fleet supplied. Nothing, accordingly, can be more lamentable than the condition of the Turkish navy since that time. The catastrophe of Navarino deprived them of their best ships and bravest sailors; the Greek revolt drained off the whole population who were wont to man their fleets. Mr Slade informs us that when he navigated on board the Capitan Pasha's ship with the Turkish squadron in 1829, the crews were composed almost entirely of landmen, who were forced on board without the slightest knowledge of nautical affairs; and that such was their timidity from inexperience, that a few English frigates would have sent the whole squadron, consisting of six ships of the line, to the bottom. The Russians also

evinced a degree of ignorance and timidity in the Euxine, which could hardly have been expected from their natural hardihood and resolution. Yet the Muscovite fleet, upon the whole, rode triumphant. By their capture of Anapa, they struck at the great market from whence Constantinople is supplied, while, by the storming of Sizepolis, they gave a *point d'appui* to Diebitsch on the coast within the Balkan, without which he could never have ventured to cross that formidable range. This ruin of the Turkish marine by the Greek Revolution and the battle of Navarino, was therefore the immediate cause of the disastrous issue of the second Russian campaign ; and the scale might have been turned, and the war made to terminate in equal disasters to the invaders, if five English ships of the line had been added to the Turkish force ; an addition, Mr Slade tells us, which would have enabled the Turks to burn the Russian arsenals and fleet at Sevastopol, and would have postponed for half a century the fall of the Ottoman Empire.

Nothing, therefore, can be more instructive than the rapid fall of the Turkish power ; nor more curious than the coincidence between the despotic acts of the reforming Eastern Sultan and of the innovating European democracies. The measures of both have been the same ; both have been actuated by the same principles, and both have yielded to the same ungovernable ambition. The Sultan commenced his reforms by destroying the territorial noblesse, ruining the privileges of corporations, and subverting the old military force of the kingdom ; and he is known to meditate the destruction of the Mahometan hierarchy, and the confiscation of the property of the church to the service of the public treasury. The Constituent Assembly of France, before it had sat six months, had annihilated the feudal nobility, extinguished the privileges of corporations, uprooted the military force of the monarchy, and confiscated the whole property of the church. The work of destruction went on far more smoothly and rapidly in the hands of the great despotic democracy, than of the Eastern Sultan ; by the whole forces of the State drawing in one direction, the old machine was pulled to pieces in France with a rapidity to which there is nothing comparable in the annals even of Oriental potentates. The rude hand even of Sultan Mah-

mould took a lifetime to accomplish that which the French democracy effected in a few months ; and even his ruthless power paused at devastations which they unhesitatingly adopted amidst the applause of the nation. Despotism, absolute despotism, was the ruling passion of both ; the Sultan proclaimed the principle that all authority flows from the Throne, and that every influence must be destroyed which does not emanate from that source ; “The Rights of Man” publicly announced the sovereignty of the people, and made every appointment, civil and military, flow from their assemblies. So true it is that despotism is actuated by the same jealousies, and leads to the same measures, whether it is that of the sovereign or the multitude ; and so just is the observation of Aristotle :—“The character of democracy and despotism is the same. Both exercise a despotic authority over the better class of citizens ; decrees are in the first, what ordinances and arrests are in the last. Though placed in different ages or countries, the court favourite and democrat are in reality the same characters, or at least they always bear a close analogy to each other ; they have the principal authority in their respective forms of government ; favourites with the absolute monarch, demagogues with the sovereign multitude.”*

The immediate effect of the great despotic acts in the two countries, however, was widely different. The innovations of Sultan Mahmoud being directed against the wishes of the majority of the nation, prostrated the strength of the Ottomans, and brought the Russian battalions in fearful strength over the Balkan. The innovations of the Constituent Assembly being done in obedience to the dictates of the people, produced for a time a portentous union of revolutionary passions, and carried the Republican standards in triumph to every capital of Europe. It is one thing to force reform upon an unwilling people ; it is another and a very different thing to yield to their wishes in imposing it upon a reluctant minority in the state.

But the ultimate effect of violent innovations, whether proceeding from the despotism of the Sultan or the multitude, is the same. In both cases they totally destroy the frame of society, and prevent the possibility of freedom

* ARIST. *de Pol.* iv. c. 4.

being permanently erected, by destroying the classes whose intermixture is essential to its existence. The consequences of destroying the Dere beys, the ayans, the Janissaries, and the ulema in Turkey, will, in the end, be the same as ruining the church, the nobility, the corporations, and landed proprietors in France. The tendency of both is identical,—to destroy all authority but that emanating from a single power in the state, and, of course, to render that power despotic. It is immaterial whether that single power is the primary assemblies of the people, or the Divan of the Sultan; whether the influence to be destroyed is that of the church or the ulema, the Dere beys or the nobility. In either case there is no counterpoise to its authority, and, of course, no limit to its oppression. As it is impossible, in the nature of things, that power should long be exercised by great bodies, as they necessarily and rapidly fall under despots of their own creation, so it is evident that the path is cleared, not only for despotism, but for absolute despotism, as completely by the innovating democracy as by the resistless Sultan. There never was such a pioneer for tyranny as the Constituent Assembly.

It is melancholy to reflect on the deplorable state of weakness to which England has been reduced since revolutionary passions seized upon her people. Three years ago, the British name was universally respected; the Portuguese pointed with gratitude to the well-fought fields, where English blood was poured forth like water in behalf of their independence; the Dutch turned with exultation to the Lion of Waterloo, the proud and unequalled monument of English fidelity; the Poles acknowledged with gratitude that, amidst all their sorrows, England alone had stood their friend, and exerted its influence at the Congress of Vienna to procure for them constitutional freedom; even the Turks, though mourning the catastrophe of Navarino, acknowledged that British diplomacy had at length interfered, and turned aside from Constantinople the sword of Russia, after the barrier of the Balkan had been broken through. Now, how woful is the change! The Portuguese recount, with undisguised indignation, the spoliation of their navy by the Tricolor fleet, then in close alliance with England; and the fostering, by British blood and treasure, of a

cruel and insidious civil war in their bosom, in aid of the principle of revolutionary propagandism : the Dutch, with indignant rage, tell the tale of the desertion by England of the allies and principles for which she had fought for a hundred and fifty years, and the shameful union of the Leopard and the Eagle, to crush the independence and partition the territories of Holland : the Polish exiles in foreign lands dwell on the heart-rending story of their wrongs, and narrate how they were led on by deceitful promises from France and England to resist, till the period of capitulation had gone by : the Eastern nations deplore the occupation of Constantinople by the Russians, and hold up their hands in astonishment at the infatuation which has led the mistress of the seas to permit the keys of the Dardanelles to be placed in the grasp of Muscovite ambition. It is in vain to conceal the fact that, by a mere change of Ministry, by simply letting loose revolutionary passions, England has descended, for the time at least, to the rank of a third-rate power. She has sunk at once, without any external disasters, from the triumphs of Trafalgar and Waterloo to the disgrace and the humiliation of Charles II. It is hard to say whether she is most despised or insulted by her ancient allies or enemies; whether contempt and hatred are strongest among those she aided or those she resisted in the late struggle. Russia defies her in the East, and, secure in the revolutionary passions by which her people are distracted, pursues with now undisguised anxiety her long-cherished and stubbornly-resisted schemes of ambition in the Dardanelles. France drags her a willing captive at her chariot-wheels, and compels the arms which once struck down Napoleon to aid her in all the mean revolutionary aggressions she is pursuing on the surrounding states. Portugal and Holland, smarting under the wounds received from their oldest ally, wait for the moment of British weakness to wreak vengeance for the wrongs inflicted under the infatuated guidance of the Whig democracy. Louis XIV., humbled by the defeats of Blenheim and Ramillies, yet spurned with indignation the proposal that he should join his arms to those of his enemies, to dispossess his ally, the King of Spain ; but England, in the hour of her greatest triumph, has submitted to a greater degradation. She has deserted and insulted

the nation which stood by her side on the field of Vitoria ; she has joined in alliance against the power which bled with her at Waterloo, and deserted in its last extremity the ally whose standards waved triumphant with hers on the sands of Egypt.

The supineness and weakness of Ministers, in the last agony of Turkey, has been such as would have exceeded belief, if woful experience had not taught us to be surprised at nothing which they can do. France acted with becoming foresight and spirit ; they had an admiral, with four ships of the line, to watch Russia in the Dardanelles, when the crisis approached. What had England ? *One ship of the line* on the way from Malta, and a few frigates in the Archipelago, were all that the mistress of the waves could afford, to support the honour and interests of England, in an emergency more pressing than any which has occurred since the battle of Trafalgar. Was the crisis not foreseen ? Every man in the country of any intelligence foresaw it, from the moment that Ibrahim besieged Acre. Can England only fit out one ship of the line to save the Dardanelles from Russia ? Is this the foresight of the Whigs, or the effect of the Dockyard reductions ? Or has the Reform Act utterly annihilated our strength, and sunk our name ?

It is evident that, in the pitiful shifts to which Government is now reduced, foreign events, even of the greatest magnitude, have no sort of weight in its deliberations. Resting on the quicksands of popular favour ; intent only on winning the applause or resisting the indignation of the rabble ; dreading the strokes of their old allies among the Political Unions ; awakened, when too late, to a sense of the dreadful danger arising from the infatuated course they have pursued ; hesitating between losing the support of the Revolutionists and pursuing the anarchical projects which they avow ; unable to command the strength of the nation for any foreign policy ; having sown the seeds of interminable dissension between the different classes of society, and spread far and wide the modern passion for innovation in lieu of the ancient patriotism of England ; they have sunk it at once in the gulf of degradation. By the passions they have excited in the empire, its strength is utterly destroyed, and well do foreign nations perceive its weakness. They

know that Ireland is on the verge of rebellion ; that the West Indies, with the torch and the tomahawk at their throats, are waiting only for the first national reverse to throw off their allegiance ; that the dockyards, stripped of their stores to make a show of economy, and conceal a sinking revenue, could no longer fit out those mighty fleets which so recently went forth from their gates, conquering and to conquer. The foreign historians of the French revolutionary war deplored the final seal it had put upon the maritime superiority of England, and declared that human sagacity could foresee no possible extrication of the seas from her resistless dominion : but how vain are the anticipations of human wisdom ! The fickle change of popular opinion subverted the mighty fabric ; a Whig Ministry succeeded to the helm, and before men had ceased to tremble at the thunder of Trafalgar, England had become contemptible on the waves !

From this sad scene of national degradation and decay, from the melancholy spectacle of the breaking up, from revolutionary passion and innovation, of the greatest and most beneficent Empire that ever existed upon earth, we turn to a more cheering prospect, and joyfully inhale from the prospects of the species those hopes which we can no longer venture to cherish for our own country.

The attention of all classes in this country has been so completely absorbed of late years by the progress of domestic changes, and the march of revolution, that little notice has been bestowed on the events we have been considering ; yet they are more important to the future fate of the species than even the approaching dismemberment of the British Empire. Events are in progress which will ere long call the world to witness the overthrow of the Mahometan religion ; the emancipation of the cradle of civilisation from Asiatic bondage ; the accomplishment of that deliverance of the Holy Sepulchre, for which the Crusaders toiled and bled in vain ; the elevation of the Cross on the Dome of St Sophia and the walls of Jerusalem.

That this great event was approaching has been long foreseen by the thoughtful and the philanthropic. The terrors of the Crescent have ceased ; it received its first check in the Gulf of Lepanto : it waned before the star of

Sobieski under the walls of Vienna, and set in flames in the Bay of Navarino. The power which once made all Christendom tremble, which shook the imperial throne, and penetrated from the sands of Arabia to the banks of the Loire, is now in the agonies of dissolution ; and that great deliverance for which the banded chivalry of Europe fought for centuries, and to attain which millions of Christian bones whitened the fields of Asia, is now about to be effected through the vacillation and indifference of their descendants. That which the courage of Richard Cœur-de-Lion, and the enthusiasm of Godfrey of Bouillon, could not achieve ; which resisted the arms of the Templars and the Hospitallers, and rolled back from Asia the tide of European invasion, is now in the act of being accomplished. A more memorable instance was never afforded of the manner in which the passions and vices of men are made to work out the intentions of an overruling Providence, and of the vanity of all human attempts to prevent that ceaseless spread of religion which has been decreed by the Almighty.

That Russia is the power by whom this great change was to be effected, by whose arm the tribes of Asia were to be reduced to subjection, and the triumph of civilisation over barbaric sway effected, has long been apparent. The gradual but unceasing pressure of the hardy races of mankind upon the effeminate, of the energy of Northern poverty on the corruption of Southern opulence, rendered it evident that this change must ultimately be effected. The final triumph of the Cross over the Crescent was secure from the moment that the Turcoman descended to the plains of Asia Minor, and the sway of the Czar was established in the deserts of Scythia. As certainly as water will ever descend from the mountains to the plain, so surely will the stream of permanent conquest, in every age, flow from the northern to the southern races of mankind.

But although the continued operation of these agencies was evident, and the *ultimate* ascendancy of the religion of Christ and the institutions of civilisation, over the tenets of Mahomet and the customs of barbarism, certain ; yet many different causes, till within these few years, contributed to check their effects, and to postpone, apparently for an indefinite period, the final liberation of the Eastern world.

But the weakness, insanity, and vacillation of England and France, while they will prove fatal to them, seem destined to subject the East to the sway of Russia, and renew, in the plains of Asia, those institutions of which Europe has become unworthy. The cause of religion, the spread of the Christian faith, has received an impulse from the vices and follies, which she never received from the sword, of Western Europe. The infidelity and irreligion of the French philosophers have done that for the downfall of Islamism which all the enthusiasm of the Crusaders could not accomplish. Their first effect was to light up a deadly war in Europe, and array the civilised powers of the world in mortal strife against each other ; but this was neither their only nor their final effect. In this contest, the arms of civilisation acquired an unparalleled ascendancy over those of barbarism ; and at its close, the power of Russia was magnified fourfold. Turkey and Persia were unable to withstand the empire from which the arms of Napoleon rolled back. The overthrow of Mahometanism, the liberation of the finest provinces of Europe from Turkish sway, flowed at last, directly and evidently, from the rise of the spirit which at first closed all the churches of France, and erected the altar of Reason in the choir of Notre Dame. We are now witnessing the conclusion of the drama.—When England descended from her high station, and gave way to revolutionary passions ; when irreligion tainted her people, and respect for the institutions of their fathers no longer influenced her government, she, too, was abandoned to the consequences of her vices ; and from her apostasy, fresh support was derived to the cause of Christianity. French irreligion had quadrupled the military strength of Russia : but the English navy still existed to uphold the tottering edifice of Turkish power. English irreligion and infidelity overturned her constitution, and the barrier was swept away.

The British navy, paralysed by democracy and divisions in the British islands, can no longer resist Muscovite ambition, and the prostration of Turkey is in consequence complete. The effects may one day be fatal to England ; but they will raise up in distant lands other empires, which may one day rival even the glories of the British name. The Cross probably will cease to be venerated at Paris, but it

will be elevated at St Sophia : it may be ridiculed in London, but it will resume its sway at Antioch. Considerations of this kind are fitted, if any can, to console us for the degradation and calamities of our own country : they show that, if one nation becomes corrupted, Providence can derive, even from its vices and ingratitude, the means of raising up other states to the glory of which it has become unworthy ; and that from the decay of civilisation in its present seats, the eye of Hope may anticipate its future resurrection in the cradle from whence it originally spread its blessings throughout the world.

LAMARTINE

[BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, Nov. 1844]

It is remarkable that, although England is the country in the world which has sent forth the greatest number of ardent and intrepid travellers to explore the distant parts of the earth, yet it can by no means furnish an array of writers of travels which will bear a comparison with those of whom France can boast. In skilful navigation, daring adventure, and heroic perseverance, indeed, the country of Cook and Davis, of Bruce and Park, of Mackenzie and Buckingham, of Burckhardt and Byron, of Parry and Franklin, may well claim the pre-eminence of all others in the world. An Englishman was among the first who circumnavigated the globe ; an Englishman alone has seen the fountains of the Nile ; and, five years after the ardent spirit of Columbus had led his fearful crews across the Atlantic, Sebastian Cabot discovered the shores of Newfoundland and the whole Continent of North America, and planted the British standard in the regions destined to be peopled with the overflowing multitudes of the Anglo-Saxon race.

But if we come to the literary works which have followed these ardent and energetic efforts, and which are destined to perpetuate their memory to future times—the interesting discoveries which have so much extended our knowledge and enlarged our resources—the contemplation is by no means to an inhabitant of these islands equally satisfactory. The British traveller is generally more a man of energy and action, than of contemplation or eloquence. He is not always possessed of the scientific acquirements requisite to turn to the best account the vast stores of new and original information which are placed within his reach. He observes

and collects facts ; but it is oftener as a practical man, or for professional purposes, than as a philosopher. The genius of the Anglo-Saxon race—bold, sagacious, and enterprising, rather than contemplative and scientific—nowhere appears more strongly than in the accounts of the numerous and intrepid travellers whom they are continually sending forth into every part of the earth. We admire their vigour, we are moved by their hardships, we are enriched by their discoveries ; but if we turn to our libraries for works to convey to future ages an adequate and interesting account of these fascinating adventures, we shall, in general, experience disappointment. Few of them are written with the practised hand, the graphic eye, necessary to convey vivid pictures to future times ; and though numerous and valuable books of travels, as works of reference, load the shelves of our libraries, there are surprisingly few which are fitted, from the interest and vivacity of the style in which they are written, to possess permanent attractions for mankind.

One great cause of this remarkable peculiarity is without doubt to be found in the widely different education of the students in our universities, and our practical men. In the former, classical attainments are in literature the chief, if not exclusive, objects of ambition ; and in consequence, the young aspirants for fame who issue from these learned retreats, have their minds filled with the charms and associations of antiquity, to the almost entire exclusion of objects of present interest and importance. The vigorous practical men, again, who are propelled by the enterprise and exertions of our commercial towns, are sagacious and valuable observers ; but they have seldom the cultivated minds, pictorial eye, or powers of description, requisite to convey vivid or interesting impressions to others. Thus our scholars give us little more than treatises on inscriptions, and disquisitions on the sites of ancient towns ; while the accounts of our practical men are chiefly occupied with commercial inquiries, or subjects connected with trade and navigation. The cultivated and enlightened traveller, whose mind is alike open to the charm of ancient story and the interest of modern achievement—who is classical without being pedantic, graphic and yet faithful, enthusiastic and yet accurate, discursive and at the same time imaginative, is almost unknown amongst us. It

will continue to be so as long as education in our universities is exclusively devoted to Greek and Latin verses or the higher mathematics, and in academies to book-keeping and the rule of three ; while so broad and sullen a line as heretofore is drawn between the studies of our scholars and the pursuits of our practical citizens. To travel to good purpose, requires a mind stored with much and varied information, in science, statistics, geography, literature, history, and poetry. To describe what the traveller has seen, requires, in addition to this, the eye of a painter, the soul of a poet, and the hand of a practised composer. Probably it will be deemed no easy matter to find such a combination in any country or in any age ; and most certainly the system of education, neither at our learned universities nor our commercial academies, is fitted to produce it.

It is from inattention to the vast store of *previous* information requisite to make an accomplished traveller, and still more a writer of interesting travels, that failures in this branch of literature are so glaring and so frequent. In other departments of knowledge, a certain degree of information is felt to be requisite before a man can presume to write a book. He cannot produce a treatise on mathematics without knowing at least Euclid, nor a work on history without having read Hume, nor on political economy without having acquired a smattering of Adam Smith. But in regard to travels, no previous information is thought to be requisite. If the person who sets out on a tour has only money in his pocket, and health to get to his journey's end, he is deemed sufficiently qualified to come out with his two or three post octavos. If he is an Honourable, or known at Almack's, so much the better ; that will ensure the sale of the first edition. If he can do nothing else, he can at least tell the dishes which he got to dinner at the inns, and the hotels where comfortable beds are to be found. This valuable information, interspersed with a few descriptions of scenes, copied from guide-books, and anecdotes picked up at *tables-d'hôte* or on board steam-boats, constitute the stock in trade of many an adventurer who embarks in the speculation of paying by publication the expenses of his travels. We have no individuals in view in these remarks ; we speak of things in general, as they are, or rather have been ; for we believe these ephemeral travels,

like other ephemerals, have had their day, and are fast dying out. The market has become so glutted with them that they are, in a great many instances, unsaleable.

The classical travellers of England, from Addison to Eustace and Clarke, constitute an important and valuable body of writers in this branch of literature, infinitely superior to the fashionable tours which rise up and disappear like bubbles on the surface of society. It is impossible to read these elegant productions without feeling the mind overspread with the charm which arises from the exquisite remains and heart-stirring associations with which they are filled. But their interest is almost exclusively classical ; they are invaluable to the accomplished scholar, but they speak in an unknown tongue to the great mass of men. They see nature only through the medium of antiquity : beautiful in their allusion to Greek or Roman remains, eloquent in the descriptions of scenes alluded to in the classical writers, they have dwelt little on the simple scenes of the unhistoric world. To the great moral and social questions which now agitate society, and so strongly move the hearts of the great body of men, they are entire strangers. Their works are the elegant companions of the scholar or the antiquary, not the heart-stirring friends of the cottage or the fireside.

Inferior to Britain in the energy and achievements of the travellers whom she has sent forth, and beyond measure beneath her in the amount of the addition she has made to geographical science, France is yet greatly superior, at least of late years, in the literary and scientific attainments of the wanderers whose works have been given to the world. Four among these stand pre-eminent, whose works, in very different styles, are at the head of European literature in this interesting department—Humboldt, Chateaubriand, Michaud, and Lamartine. Their styles are so various, and the impression produced by reading them so distinct, that it is difficult to believe that they have arisen in the same nation and age of the world.

Humboldt is, in many respects, and perhaps upon the whole, at the head of the list. He unites, in a degree that perhaps has never before been witnessed, the most various qualities, and which, from the opposite characters of mind which they require, are rarely found in unison. A profound

philosopher, an accurate observer of nature, an unwearied statist, he is at the same time an eloquent writer, an incomparable describer, and an ardent friend of social improvement. Science owes to his indefatigable industry some of her most valuable acquisitions ; geography, to his intrepid perseverance, many of its most important discoveries ; the arts, to his poetic eye and fervid eloquence, not a few of their brightest pictures. He unites the austere grandeur of the exact sciences to the bewitching charm of the fine arts. It is this very combination which prevents his works from being generally popular. The riches of his knowledge, the magnitude of his contributions to scientific discovery, the fervour of his descriptions of nature, alternately awaken our admiration and excite our surprise ; but they oppress the mind. To be rightly apprehended, they require a reader in some degree familiar with all these subjects ; and how many of these are to be met with ? The man who takes an interest in his scientific observations will seldom be transported by his pictures of scenery ; the social observer, who extracts the rich collection of facts which he has accumulated regarding the people whom he visited, will be indifferent to his geographical discoveries. There are few Humboldts either in the reading or thinking world.

Chateaubriand is a traveller of a wholly different character : he lived entirely in antiquity. But it is not the antiquity of Greece and Rome which has alone fixed his regards, as it has done those of Clarke and Eustace : it is the recollections of chivalry, the devout spirit of the pilgrim, which chiefly warmed his ardent imagination. He is universally allowed by Frenchmen of all parties to be their first writer ; and it may be conceived what brilliant works an author of such powers, and eminently gifted with both the soul of a poet and the eye of a painter, must have produced in describing the historic scenes to which his pilgrimages extended. He went to Greece and the Holy Land with a mind devout rather than enlightened, credulous rather than inquisitive. Thirsting for strong emotions, he would be satisfied ; teeming with the recollections and visions of the past, he traversed the places hallowed by his early affections with the fondness of a lover who returns to the home of his bliss, of a mature man who revisits the scenes of his

infancy. He cared not to inquire what was true or what was legendary in these time-hallowed traditions ; he gladly accepted them as they stood, and studiously averted all inquiry into the foundation on which they rested. He wandered over the Peloponnesus or Judea with the fond ardour of an English scholar who seeks in the Palatine Mount the traces of Virgil's enchanting description of the hut of Evander, and rejects as sacrilege every attempt to shake his faith.

“ When Science from Creation's face
Enchantment's veil withdraws,
What lovely visions yield their place
To cold material laws ! ”

Even in the woods of America the same ruling passion was evinced. In those pathless solitudes, where no human foot had ever trod but that of the wandering savage, and the majesty of nature appeared in undisturbed repose, his thoughts were still of the Old World. It was on the historic lands that his heart was set. A man himself, he dwelt on the scenes which had been signalised by the deeds, the sufferings, the glories of man.

Michaud's mind is akin to that of Chateaubriand, and yet different in many important particulars. The learned and indefatigable historian of the Crusades, he has traversed the shores of the Mediterranean—the scene, as Dr Johnson observed, of all that can ever interest man—his religion, his knowledge, his arts—with the ardent desire to imprint on his mind the scenes and images which met the eyes of the holy warriors. He seeks to transport us to the days of Godfrey of Bouillon and Raymond of Toulouse ; he thirsts with the Christian host at Dorislaus, he shares in its anxieties at the siege of Antioch, he participates in its exultation at the storming of Jerusalem. The scenes visited by the vast multitude of warriors who, during two hundred years, were precipitated from Europe on Asia, have almost all been visited by him, and described with the accuracy of an antiquary and the enthusiasm of a poet. With the old chronicles in his hand, he treads with veneration the scenes of former generous sacrifice and heroic achievements ; and the vast and massy structures erected on either side during those terrible wars—when, for centuries, Europe strove hand to hand with

Asia—most of which have undergone very little alteration, enable him to describe them almost exactly as they appeared to the holy warriors. The interest of his pilgrimage in the East, accordingly, is peculiar, but very great. It is not so much a book of travels as a moving chronicle ; but, like Sir Walter Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Borders*, it is a chronicle clothed in a very different garb from the homely dress of the olden time. It transports us back, not only in time but in idea, six hundred years ; but it does so with the grace of modern times—it clothes the profound feelings, the generous sacrifices, the forgetfulness of self of the twelfth century, with the poetic mind, the cultivated taste, the refined imagery of the nineteenth.

Lamartine has traversed the same scenes with Chateaubriand and Michaud, and yet he has done so in a different spirit ; and the character of his work is essentially different from that of either. He has not the devout credulity of the first, nor the antiquarian zeal and knowledge of the last ; but he is superior to either in the description of nature, and the painting vivid and interesting scenes on the mind of the reader. His work is a moving panorama, in which the historic scenes and azure skies, and placid seas and glowing sunsets, of the East, are portrayed in all their native brilliancy, and in richer even than their native colours. His mind is stored with the associations and the ideas of antiquity, and he has thrown over his descriptions of the scenes of Greece or Holy Writ all the charms of such recollections ; but he has done so in a more general and catholic spirit than either of his predecessors. He embarked for the Holy Land shortly before the Revolution of 1830 ; and his thoughts, amidst all the associations of antiquity, constantly reverted to the land of his fathers—its distractions, its woes, its ceaseless turmoil, its gloomy social prospects. Thus, with all his vivid imagination and unrivalled powers of description, the turn of his mind is essentially contemplative. He looks on the past as an emblem of the present ; he sees, in the fall of Tyre and Athens and Jerusalem, the fate which one day awaits his own country ; and mourns less the decay of human things than the popular passions and national sins which have brought that instability into close proximity to his own times. This sensitive and foreboding disposition

was much increased by the death of his daughter—a charming child of fourteen, the companion of his wanderings, the depositary of his thoughts, the darling of his affections—who was snatched away in the spring of life, when in health and joy, by one of the malignant fevers incident to the pestilential plains of the East.

Though Lamartine's travels are continuous, he does not, like most other wanderers, furnish us with a journal of every day's proceedings. He was too well aware that many, perhaps most, days on a journey are monotonous or uninteresting; and that many of the details of a traveller's progress are wholly unworthy of being recorded, because they are neither amusing, elevating, nor instructive. He paints, now and then, with all the force of his magical pencil, the more brilliant or characteristic scenes which he visited, and intersperses them with reflections, moral and social, such as would naturally be aroused in a sensitive mind by the sight of the ruins of ancient, and the contemplation of the decay of modern times.

He embarked at Marseilles, with Madame Lamartine and his little daughter Julia, on the 10th July 1830. The following is the picture of the yearnings of his mind on leaving his native land; and they convey a faithful image of his intellectual temperament:—

“I feel it deeply: I am one only of those men, without a distinctive character, of a transitory and fading epoch, whose sighs have found an echo—only because the echo was more poetical than the poet. I belong to another age by my desires: I feel in myself another man: the immense and boundless horizon of philosophy, at once profound, religious, and poetical, has opened to my view; but the punishment of a wasted youth overtook me; it soon faded from my sight. Adieu, then, to the dreams of genius, to the aspirations of intellectual enjoyment! It is too late: I have not physical strength to accomplish anything great. I will sketch some scenes—I will murmur some strains; and that is all. Yet if God would grant my prayers, here is the object for which I would petition—a poem, such as my heart desires, and His greatness deserves!—a faithful, breathing image of His creation: of the boundless world, visible and invisible! That would indeed be a worthy inheritance to leave to an era of darkness, of doubt, and of sadness!—an inheritance which would nourish the present age, and cause the next to spring with renovated youth.”—*Voyages en Orient*, i. 49–50.*

One of his first nocturnal reveries at sea portrays the tender and profoundly religious impressions of his mind:—

* We have translated all the passages ourselves: the versions hitherto published in this country give, as most English translations of French works do, a most imperfect idea of the original.

“I walked for an hour on the deck of the vessel alone, and immersed alternately in sad or consoling reflections. I repeated in my heart all the prayers which I learned in infancy from my mother: the verses, the fragments of the Psalms, which I had so often heard her repeat to herself, when walking in the evening in the garden of Melly. I experienced a melancholy pleasure in thus scattering them, in my turn, to the waves, to the winds, to that Ear which is ever open to every real movement of the heart, though not yet uttered by the lips. The prayer which we have heard repeated by one we have loved, and who is no more, is doubly sacred. Who among us would not prefer a few words of prayer taught us by our mother, to the most eloquent supplication composed by ourselves? Thence it is that whatever religious creed we may adopt at the age of reason, the Christian prayer will be ever the prayer of the human race. I prayed, in the prayer of the church for the evening at sea; also for that dear being, who never thought of danger to accompany her husband, and that lovely child, who played at the moment on the poop with the goat which was to give it milk on board, and with the little kids which licked her snow-white hands, and sported with her long and fair ringlets.”—(Vol. i. 57.)

A night-scene on the coast of Provence gives a specimen of his descriptive powers:—

“It was night—that is, what they call night in those climates; but how many days have I seen less brilliant on the banks of the Thames, the Seine, the Saone, or the Lake of Geneva! A full moon shone in the firmament, and cast into the shade our vessel, which lay motionless on the water at a little distance from the quay. The moon, in her progress through the heavens, had left a path marked as if with red sand, with which she had besprinkled the half of the sky: the remainder was clear deep blue, which melted into white as she advanced. On the horizon, at the distance of two miles, between two little isles, of which the one had headlands pointed and coloured like the Coliseum at Rome, while the other was violet like the flower of the lilac, the image of a vast city appeared on the sea. It was an illusion, doubtless; but it had all the appearance of reality. You saw clearly the domes glancing—dazzling lines of palaces—quays flooded by a soft and serene light; on the right and the left the waves were seen to sparkle and enclose it on either side: it was Venice or Malta reposing in the midst of the waters. The illusion was produced by the reflection of the moon, when her rays fell perpendicularly on the waters; nearer the eye, the radiance spread and expanded in a stream of gold and silver between two shores of azure. On the left, the gulf extended to the summit of a long and obscure range of serrated mountains; on the right opened a narrow and deep valley, where a fountain gushed forth beneath the shade of aged trees; behind, rose a hill, clothed to the top with olives, which in the night appeared dark, from its summit to its base—a line of Gothic towers and white houses broke the obscurity of the wood, and drew the thoughts to the abodes, the joys, and the sufferings of man. Further off, in the extremity of the gulf, three enormous rocks rose, like pillars without base, from the surface of the waters: their forms were fantastic, their surface polished like flints by the action of the waves: but those flints were mountains—the remains, doubtless, of that primeval ocean which once overspread the earth, and of which our seas are but a feeble image.”—(Vol. ii. 66.)

A rocky bay on the same romantic coast, now rendered accessible to travellers by the magnificent road of the Corniché, projected, and in part executed, by Napoleon, furnishes another subject for this exquisite pencil:—

"A mile to the eastward on the coast, the mountains, which there dip into the sea, are broken as if by the strokes of enormous clubs—huge fragments have fallen, and are strewn in wild confusion at the foot of the cliffs, or amidst the blue and green waves of the sea, which incessantly laves them. The waves break on these huge masses without intermission, with a hollow and alternating roar, or rise up in sheets of foam, which besprinkle their hoary fronts. These masses of mountains—for they are too large to be called rocks—are piled and heaped together in such numbers, that they form an innumerable number of narrow havens, of profound caverns, of sounding grottoes, of gloomy fissures—of which the children of some of the neighbouring fishermen alone know the windings and the issues. One of these caverns, into which you enter by a natural arch, the summit of which is formed by an enormous block of granite, lets in the sea, through which it flows into a dark and narrow valley, which the waters fill entirely, with a surface as limpid and smooth as the firmament which they reflect. The sea preserves in this sequestered nook that beautiful tint of bright green, of which marine painters so strongly feel the value, but which they can never transfer exactly to their canvass; for the eye sees much which the hand strives in vain to imitate.

"On the two sides of that marine valley rise two prodigious walls of perpendicular rock, of a uniform and sombre hue, similar to that of iron ore after it has issued and cooled from the furnace. Not a plant, not a moss can find a slope or a crevice wherein to insert its roots, or cover the rocks with those waving garlands which so often in Savoy clothe the cliffs, where they flower to God alone. Black, naked, perpendicular, repelling the eye by their awful aspect, they seem to have been placed there for no other purpose but to protect from the sea-breezes the hills of olives and vines, which bloom under their shelter; an image of those ruling men in a stormy epoch, who seem placed by Providence to bear the fury of all the tempests of passion and of time, to screen the weaker but happier race of mortals. At the bottom of the bay the sea expands a little, assumes a bluer tint as it comes to reflect more of the cloudless heavens, and at length its tiny waves die away on a bed of violets, as closely netted together as the sand upon the shore. If you disembark from the boat, you find in the cleft of a neighbouring ravine a fountain of living water, which gushes beneath a narrow path formed by the goats, which leads up from this sequestered solitude, amidst overshadowing fig-trees and oleanders, to the cultivated abodes of man. Few scenes struck me so much in my long wanderings. Its charm consists in that exquisite union of force and grace, which forms the perfection of natural beauty as of the highest class of intellectual beings; it is that mysterious hymen of the land and the sea, surprised as it were in their most secret and hidden union. It is the image of perfect calm and inaccessible solitude, close to the theatre of tumultuous tempests, where their near roar is heard with such terror, where their foaming but lessened waves yet break upon the shore. It is one of those numerous *chefs-d'œuvre* of creation which God has scattered over the earth, as if to sport with contrasts, but which he conceals so frequently on the summit of naked rocks, in the depth of inaccessible ravines, on the unapproachable shores of the ocean, like jewels which he unveils rarely, and that only to simple beings, to children, to shepherds or fishermen, or the devout worshippers of nature."—(Vol. i. 73–74.)

This style of description of scenery is peculiar to this age, and in it Lamartine may safely be pronounced without a rival in the whole range of literature. It was with Scott and Chateaubriand that the *graphic* style of description arose in England and France; but he has pushed the art

further than either of his great predecessors. Milton and Thomson had long ago indeed, in poetry, painted nature in the most enchanting, as well as the truest colours ; but in prose little was to be found except a general and vague description of a class of objects, as lakes, mountains, and rivers, without any specification of features and details, so as to convey a definite and distinct impression to the mind of the reader. Even the classical mind and refined taste of Addison could not attain this graphic style ; his descriptions of scenery, like those of all prose writers down to the close of the eighteenth century, are lost in vague generalities. Like most of the descriptions of battles in modern times, they are so like each other that you cannot distinguish one from the other. Scott and Chateaubriand, when they did apply their great powers to the delineation of nature, were incomparably faithful, as well as powerfully imaginative ; but such descriptions were, for the most part, but a secondary object with them. The human heart was their great study ; the vicissitudes of life the inexhaustible theme of their genius. With Lamartine, again, the description of nature is the primary object. It is to convey a vivid impression of the scenes he has visited that he has written ; to kindle in his reader's mind the train of emotion and association which their contemplation awakened in his own, that he has exerted all his powers. He is much more laboured and minute, in consequence, than either of his predecessors ; he records the tints, the forms, the lights, the transient effects, with all a painter's enthusiasm and all a poet's power ; and succeeds, in any mind at all familiar with the objects of nature, in conjuring up images as vivid, sometimes perhaps more beautiful, than the originals which he portrayed.

From the greatness of his powers, however, in this respect, and the facility with which he commits to paper the whole features of the splendid phantasmagoria with which his memory is stored, arises the principal defect of his work ; and the circumstance which has hitherto prevented it, in this country at least, from acquiring general popularity commensurate to its transcendent merits. He is too rich in glowing images ; his descriptions are redundant in number and beauty. The mind even of the most imaginative reader is fatigued by the constant drain upon its admiration ; the

fancy is exhausted in the perpetual effort to conceive the scenes which he portrays to the eye. Images of beauty enough are to be found in his four volumes of *Travels in the East*, to emblazon, with the brightest colours of the rainbow, forty volumes of ordinary adventure. We long for some repose amidst the constant repetition of dazzling objects; monotony, insipidity, ordinary life, even dulness itself, would often be a relief amidst the ceaseless flow of rousing images. Sir Walter Scott says, in one of his novels—"Be assured that whenever I am particularly dull, it is not without an object;" and Lamartine would sometimes be the better of following the system. We generally close one of his volumes with the feeling so well known to travellers in the Italian cities, "I hope to God there is nothing more to be seen here." And having given the necessary respite of unexciting disquisition to rest our readers' minds, we shall again bring forward one of his glowing pictures:—

"Between the sea and the last heights of Lebanon, which sink rapidly almost to the water's edge, extends a plain eight leagues in length by one or two broad; sandy, bare, covered only with thorny arbutus, browsed by the camels of caravans. From it darts out into the sea an advanced peninsula, linked to the continent only by a narrow *chaussée* of shining sand, borne hither by the winds of Egypt. Tyre, now called Sour by the Arabs, is situated at the extremity of this peninsula, and seems, at a distance, to rise out of the waves. The modern town, at first sight, has a gay and smiling appearance; but a nearer approach dispels the illusion, and exhibits only a few hundred crumbling and half-deserted houses, where the Arabs in the evening assemble to shelter their flocks which have browsed in the narrow plain. Such is all that now remains of the mighty Tyre. It has neither a harbour to the sea, nor a road to the land; the prophecies have long been accomplished in regard to it.

"We moved on in silence, buried in the contemplation of the dust of an empire which we trod. We followed a path in the middle of the plain of Tyre, between the town and the hills of grey and naked rock which Lebanon has thrown down towards the sea. We arrived abreast of the city, and touched a mound of sand which appears the sole remaining rampart to prevent it from being overwhelmed by the waves of the ocean or the desert. I thought of the prophecies, and called to mind some of the eloquent denunciations of Ezekiel. As I was making these reflections, some objects, black, gigantic, and motionless, appeared upon the summit of one of the overhanging cliffs of Lebanon, which there advanced far into the plain. They resembled five black statues, placed on a rock as their huge pedestal. At first we thought it was five Bedouins, who were there stationed to fire upon us from their inaccessible heights; but when we were at the distance of fifty yards, we beheld one of them open its enormous wings, and flap them against its sides with a sound like the unfurling of a sail. We then perceived that they were five eagles of the largest species I have ever seen, either in the Alps or our museums. They made no attempt to move when we approached; they seemed to regard themselves as kings of the desert,

looked on Tyre as an appanage which belonged to them, and whither they were about to return. Nothing more supernatural ever met my eyes; I could almost suppose that behind them I saw the terrible figure of Ezekiel, the poet of vengeance, pointing to the devoted city which the divine wrath had overwhelmed with destruction. The discharge of a few muskets made them rise from their rock; but they showed no disposition to move from their ominous perch, and, soon returning, floated over our heads, regardless of the shots fired at them, as if the eagles of God were beyond the reach of human injury."—(Vol. ii. 8-9.)

Jerusalem was a subject to awaken all our author's enthusiasm, and call forth all his descriptive powers. The first approach to it has exercised the talents of many writers in prose and verse; but no one has drawn it in such graphic and brilliant colours as our author:—

"We ascended a mountain ridge, strewn over with enormous grey rocks, piled one on another as if by human hands. Here and there a few stunted vines, yellow with the colour of autumn, crept along the soil in a few places cleared out in the wilderness. Fig-trees, with their tops withered or shivered by the blasts, often edged the vines, and cast their black fruit on the grey rock. On our right, the desert of St John, where formerly 'the voice was heard crying in the wilderness,' sank like an abyss in the midst of five or six black mountains, through the openings of which the sea of Egypt, overspread with a dark cloud, could still be discerned. On the left, and near the eye, was an old tower, placed on the top of a projecting eminence; other ruins, apparently of an ancient aqueduct, descended from that tower, overgrown with verdure, now in the sear leaf; that tower is Modin, the stronghold and tomb of the last heroes of sacred story, the Maccabees. We left behind us the ruins, resplendent with the first rays of the morning—rays, not blended as in Europe in a confused and vague illumination, but darting like arrows of fire tinted with various colours, issuing from a dazzling centre, and diverging over the whole heavens as they expand. Some were of blue, slightly silvered, others of pure white, some of tender rose-hue, melting into grey; many of burning fire, like the corruscations of a flaming conflagration. All were distinct, yet all united in one harmonious whole, forming a resplendent arch in the heavens, encircling, and issuing from a centre of fire. In proportion as the day advanced, the brilliant light of these separate rays was gradually dimmed—or rather they were blended together, and composed the colourless light of day. Then the moon, which still shone overhead, 'paled her ineffectual fire,' and melted away in the general illumination of the heavens.

"After having ascended a second ridge, more lofty and naked than the former, the horizon suddenly opens to the right, and presents a view of all the country which extends between the last summits of Judea and the mountains of Arabia. It was already flooded with the increasing light of the morning; but beyond the piles of grey rock which lay in the foreground, nothing was distinctly visible but a dazzling space, like a vast sea, interspersed with a few islands of shade, which stood forth in the brilliant surface. On the shores of that imaginary ocean, a little to the left, and about a league distant, the sun shone with uncommon brilliancy on a massy tower, a lofty minaret, and some edifices, which crowned the summit of a low hill of which you could not see the bottom. Soon the points of other minarets, a few loopholed walls, and the dark summits of several domes, which successively came into view, and fringed the descending slope of the hill, announced a city. It was JERUSALEM, and every one of the party,

without addressing a word to the guides or to each other, enjoyed in silence the entrancing spectacle. We rested our horses to contemplate that mysterious and dazzling apparition; but when we moved on it was soon snatched from our view; for as we descended the hill, and plunged into the deep and profound valley which lay at its feet, we lost sight of the holy city, and were surrounded only by the solitude and desolation of the desert.”—(Vol. ii. 163-165.)

The environs of Jerusalem are described with equal force by the same master-hand :—

“ The general aspect of the environs of Jerusalem may be described in a few words. Mountains without shade, and valleys without water—the earth without verdure, rocks without grandeur. Here and there a few blocks of grey stone start up out of the dry and fissured earth, between which, beneath the shade of an old fig-tree, a gazelle or a hyæna is occasionally seen to emerge from the fissures of the rock. A few plants or vines creep over the surface of that grey and parched soil; in the distance is occasionally seen a grove of olive-trees, casting a shade over the arid side of the mountain—the mouldering walls and towers of the city appearing from afar on the summit of Mount Sion. Such is the general character of the country. The sky is ever pure, bright, and cloudless; never does even the slightest film of mist obscure the purple tint of evening and morning. On the side of Arabia, a wide gulf opens amidst the black ridges, and presents a vista of the shining surface of the Dead Sea, and the violet summits of the mountains of Moab. Rarely is a breath of air heard to murmur in the fissures of the rocks, or among the branches of the aged olives; not a bird sings, nor an insect chirps in the waterless furrows. Silence reigns universally, in the city, in the roads, in the fields. Such was Jerusalem during all the time that we spent within its walls. Not a sound ever met our ears but the neighing of the horses, who grew impatient under the burning rays of the sun, or furrowed the earth with their feet as they stood picketed round our camp, mingled occasionally with the crying of the hour from the minarets, or the mournful cadences of the Turks as they accompanied the dead to their cemeteries. Jerusalem, to which the world hastens to visit a sepulchre, is itself a vast tomb of a people; but it is a tomb without cypresses, without inscriptions, without monuments, of which they have broken the gravestones, and the ashes of which appear to cover the earth that surrounds it with mourning, silence, and sterility. We cast our eyes back frequently from the top of every hill which we passed on this mournful and desolate region, and at length we saw for the last time, the crown of olives which surmounts the Mount of the same name, and which long rises above the horizon after you have lost sight of the town itself. At length it also sank beneath the rocky screen, and disappeared like the chaplets of flowers which we throw on a sepulchre.”—(Vol. ii. 275-276.)

From Jerusalem he made an expedition to Balbec in the desert, which produced the same impression upon him that it does upon all other travellers :—

“ We rose with the sun, the first rays of which struck on the temples of Balbec, and gave to those mysterious ruins that *eclât* which his brilliant light throws ever over ruins which it illuminates. Soon we arrived, on the northern side, at the foot of the gigantic walls which surround those beautiful remains. A clear stream, flowing over a bed of granite, murmured

around the enormous blocks of stone, fallen from the top of the wall, which obstructed its course. Beautiful sculptures were half concealed in the limpid stream. We passed the rivulet by an arch formed by these fallen remains, and, mounting a narrow breach, were soon lost in admiration of the scene which surrounded us. At every step a fresh exclamation of surprise broke from our lips. Every one of the stones of which that wall was composed was from eight to ten feet in length, by five or six in breadth, and as much in height. They rest, without cement, one upon the other, and almost all bear the mark of Indian or Egyptian sculpture. At a single glance, you see that these enormous stones are not placed in their original site; that they are the precious remains of temples of still more remote antiquity, which were made use of to encircle this colony of Grecian and Roman citizens.

“ When we reached the summit of the breach, our eyes knew not to what object first to turn. On all sides were marble gates of prodigious height and magnitude; windows, or niches, fringed with the richest friezes; fallen pieces of cornices, of entablatures, or capitals, thick as the dust beneath our feet; magnificent vaulted roofs above our heads; everywhere a chaos of confused beauty, the remains of which lay scattered about, or piled on each other in endless variety. So prodigious is the accumulation of architectural remains, that it defies all attempt at classification, or conjecture of the kind of buildings to which the greater part of them had belonged. After passing through this scene of ruined magnificence, we reached an inner wall, which we also ascended; and from its summit the view of the interior was yet more splendid. Of much greater extent, far more richly decorated than the outer circle, it presented an immense platform in the form of a long rectangle, the level surface of which was frequently broken by the remains of still more elevated pavements, on which temples to the sun, the object of adoration at Balbec, had been erected. All around that platform were a series of lesser temples—or chapels, as we should call them—decorated with niches, admirably engraved, and loaded with sculptured ornaments to a degree that appeared excessive to those who had seen the severe simplicity of the Parthenon or the Coliseum. But how prodigious the accumulation of architectural riches in the heart of an Eastern desert! Combine in imagination the Temple of Jupiter Stator and the Coliseum at Rome, of Jupiter Olympius and the Acropolis at Athens, and you will yet fall short of that marvellous assemblage of admirable edifices and sculptures. Many of the temples rest on columns seventy feet in height, and seven feet in diameter, yet composed only of two or three blocks of stone, so perfectly joined together that to this day you can barely discern the lines of their junction. Silence is the only language which befits man when words are inadequate to convey his impressions. We remained mute with admiration, gazing on the eternal ruins.

“ The shades of night overtook us while we yet rested in amazement at the scene by which we were surrounded. One by one they enveloped the columns in their obscurity, and added a mystery the more to that magical and mysterious work of time and man. We appeared, as compared with the gigantic mass and long duration of these monuments, as the swallows which nestle a season in the crevices of the capitals, without knowing by whom, or for whom, they have been constructed. The thoughts, the wishes, which moved these masses, are to us unknown. The dust of marble which we tread beneath our feet knows more of it than we do, but it cannot tell us what it has seen; and in a few ages the generations which shall come in their turn to visit our monuments, will ask, in like manner, wherefore we have built and engraved. The works of man survive his thought. Movement is the law of the human mind; the definite is the dream of his pride and his ignorance. God is a limit which appears ever to recede as humanity approaches him: we are

ever advancing, and never arrive. This great Divine Figure, which man from his infancy is ever striving to reach, and to imprison in his structures raised by hands, for ever enlarges and expands; it outsteps the narrow limits of temples, and leaves the altars to crumble into dust; and calls man to seek for it where alone it resides—in thought, in intelligence, in virtue, in nature, in infinity.”—(Vol. ii. 39, 46, 47.)

This passage conveys an idea of the peculiar style, and perhaps unique charm, of Lamartine's work. It is the mixture of vivid painting with moral reflection—of nature with sentiment—of sensibility to beauty, with gratitude to its Author, that constitutes its great attraction. Considering in what spirit the French Revolution was cradled, and from what infidelity it arose, it is consoling to see such sentiments conceived and published among them. True, they are not the sentiments of the majority, at least in towns; but what then? The majority is ever guided by the thoughts of the great, not in its own but in a preceding age. It is the opinions of the great among our grandfathers that govern the majority at this time; our great men will guide our grandsons. If we would foresee what a future age is to think, we must observe what a few great men are now thinking. Voltaire and Rousseau have ruled France for two generations; the day of Chateaubriand, and Guizot, and Lamartine, will come in due time.

But the extraordinary magnitude of these ruins in the midst of an Asiatic wilderness, suggests another consideration. We are perpetually speaking of the march of intellect, the vast spread of intelligence, the advancing civilisation of the world; and in some respects our boasts are well founded. Certainly, in one particular, society has made a mighty step in advance. The abolition of domestic slavery has emancipated the millions who formerly toiled in bondage; the art of printing has multiplied a hundredfold the reading and thinking world. Our opportunities, therefore, have been prodigiously enlarged; our means of elevation are tenfold what they were in ancient times. But has our elevation itself kept pace with these enlarged means? Has the increased direction of the popular mind to lofty and spiritual objects, the more complete subjugation of sense, the enlarged perception of the useful and the beautiful, been in proportion to the extended facilities given to the great body of the people? Alas! the fact is just the reverse.

Balbec was a mere station in the desert, without territory, harbour, or subjects—maintained solely by the commerce of the East with Europe which flowed through its walls. Yet Balbec raised, in less than a century, more glorious piles of structures devoted to religious and lofty objects, than London, Paris, and St Petersburg united can now boast. The Decapolis was a small and remote mountain district of Palestine, not larger in proportion to the Roman, than Morayshire is in proportion to the British empire; yet it contained, as its name indicates, and as their remains still attest, *ten cities*, the least considerable of which, Gebora, contains, as Buckingham tells us in his *Travels beyond the Jordan*, the ruins of more sumptuous edifices than any city in the British islands, London itself not excepted, can now boast. It was the same all over the East, and in all the southern provinces of the Roman empire. Whence has arisen this astonishing disproportion between the great things done by the citizens in ancient and in modern times, when in the latter the means of enlarged cultivation have been so immeasurably extended? It is in vain to say, it is because we have more social and domestic happiness, and our wealth is devoted to these objects, not to external embellishment. Social and domestic happiness are in the direct, not in the inverse ratio of general refinement and the spread of intellectual intelligence. The domestic duties are better nourished in the temple than in the gin-shop; the admirers of sculpture will make better fathers and husbands than the lovers of whisky. Is it that we want funds for such undertakings? Why, London is richer than ever Rome was; the commerce of the world, not of the Eastern caravans, flows through its bosom. The sums annually squandered in Manchester and Glasgow on intoxicating liquors, would soon make them rival the eternal structures of Tadmor and Palmyra. They exceed *a million sterling* every year in each of these cities. Is it that the great bulk of our people are unavoidably chained by their character and climate to gross and degrading enjoyments? Is it that the spreading of knowledge, intelligence, and free institutions, only confirms the sway of sensual gratification, and that a pure and spiritual religion tends only to strengthen the fetters of passion and selfishness? Is it that the inherent depravity

of the human heart appears the more clearly as man is emancipated from the fetters of authority? Must we go back to early ages for noble and elevated motives of action: is the spread of freedom but another word for the extension of brutality? God forbid that so melancholy a doctrine should have any foundation in human nature! We mention the facts, and leave it to future ages to discover their solution; contenting ourselves with pointing out to our self-applauding countrymen how much they have to do before they attain the level of their advantages, or justify the boundless blessings which Providence has bestowed upon them.

The plain of Troy, seen by moonlight, furnishes the subject of one of our author's most striking passages:—

“It is midnight; the sea is calm as a mirror; the vessel floats motionless on the resplendent surface. On our left, Tenedos rises above the waves, and shuts out the view of the open sea; on our right, and close to us, stretched out like a dark bar, the low shore and indented coasts of TROY. The full moon, which rises behind the snow-streaked summit of Mount Ida, sheds a serene and doubtful light over the summits of the mountains, the hills, the plain; its extending rays fall upon the sea, and reach the shadow of our brig, forming a bright path which the shades do not venture to approach. We can discern the *tumuli*, which tradition still marks as the tombs of Hector and Patroclus. The full moon, slightly tinged with red, which discloses the undulations of the hills, resembles the bloody buckler of Achilles; no light is to be seen on the coast, but a distant twinkling, lighted by the shepherds on Mount Ida; not a sound is to be heard but the flapping of the sail on the mast, and the slight creaking of the mast itself; all seems dead like the past in that deserted land. Seated on the forecastle, I see that shore, those mountains, those ruins, those tombs, rise like the ghost of the departed world, reappear from the bosom of the sea with shadowy form, by the rays of the star of night, which sleep on the hills, and disappear as the moon recedes behind the summits of the mountains. It is a beautiful additional page in the poems of Homer—the end of all history and of all poetry! Unknown tombs, ruins without a certain name; the earth naked and dark, but imperfectly lighted by the immortal luminaries; new spectators passing by the old coast, and repeating for the thousandth time the common epitaph of mortality! Here lies an empire, here a town, here a people, here a hero! God alone is great, and the thought which seeks and adores Him alone is imperishable upon earth. I feel no desire to make a nearer approach in daylight to the doubtful remains of the ruins of Troy. I prefer that nocturnal apparition, which allows the thought to repeople those deserts, and sheds over them only the distant light of the moon and of the poetry of Homer. And what concerns me Troy, its heroes, and its gods? That leaf of the heroic world is turned for ever!”—(Vol. ii. 248-250.)

What a magnificent testimonial to the genius of Homer, written in a foreign tongue, two thousand seven hundred years after his death!

The Dardanelles and the Bosphorus have, from the dawn

of letters, exercised the descriptive talents of the greatest historians of modern Europe. The truthful chronicle of Villehardouin, and the eloquent pictures of Gibbon and Sismondi of the siege of Constantinople, will immediately occur to every scholar. The following passage, however, will show that no subject can be worn out when it is handled by the pen of genius :—

“It was five in the morning. I was standing on deck. We made sail towards the mouth of the Bosphorus, skirting the walls of Constantinople. After half an hour’s navigation through ships at anchor, we touched the walls of the Seraglio, which prolong those of the city, and form, at the extremity of the hill which supports the proud Stamboul, the angle which separates the sea of Marmora from the canal of the Bosphorus, and the harbour of the Golden Horn. It is there that God and man, nature and art, have combined to form the most marvellous spectacle which the human eye can behold. I uttered an involuntary cry when the magnificent panorama opened upon my sight ; I forgot for ever the Bay of Naples and all its enchantments ; to compare anything to that marvellous and graceful combination would be an injury to the fairest work of creation.

“The walls which support the circular terraces of the immense gardens of the Seraglio were on our left, with their base perpetually washed by the waters of the Bosphorus, blue and limpid as the Rhone at Geneva ; the terraces which rise one above another to the palace of the Sultana, the gilded cupolas of which rose above the gigantic summits of the plane-tree and the cypress, were themselves clothed with enormous trees, the trunks of which overhang the walls ; while their branches, overspreading the gardens, spread a deep shadow even far into the sea, beneath the protection of which the panting rowers repose from their toil. These stately groups of trees are from time to time interrupted by palaces, pavilions, kiosks, gilded and sculptured domes, or batteries of cannon. These maritime palaces form part of the Seraglio. You see occasionally through the muslin curtains the gilded roofs and sumptuous cornices of those abodes of beauty. At every step, elegant Moorish fountains fall from the higher parts of the gardens, and murmur in marble basins, from whence, before reaching the sea, they are conducted in little cascades to refresh the passengers. As the vessel coasted the walls, the prospect expanded ; the coast of Asia appeared, and the mouth of the Bosphorus, properly so called, began to open between hills, on one side of dark green, on the other of smiling verdure, which seemed variegated by all the colours of the rainbow. The smiling shores of Asia, distant about a mile, stretched out to our right, surmounted by lofty hills, sharp at the top, and clothed to the summit with dark forests, with their sides varied by hedgerows, villas, orchards, and gardens. Deep precipitous ravines occasionally descended on this side into the sea, overshadowed by huge overgrown oaks, the branches of which dipped into the water. Further on still, on the Asiatic side, an advanced headland projected into the waves, covered with white houses ; it was Scutari, with its vast white barracks, its resplendent mosques, its animated quays, forming a great city. Further still, the Bosphorus, like a deeply imbedded river, opened between opposing mountains ; the advancing promontories and receding bays of which, clothed to the water’s edge with forests, exhibited a confused assemblage of masts of vessels, shady groves, noble palaces, hanging gardens, and tranquil havens.

“The harbour of Constantinople is not, properly speaking, a port. It is rather a great river like the Thames, shut in on either side by hills covered

with houses, and covered by innumerable lines of ships lying at anchor along the quays. Vessels of every description are to be seen there, from the Arabian bark, the prow of which is raised, and darts along like the ancient galleys, to the ship of the line, with three decks, and its sides studded with brazen mouths. Multitudes of Turkish barks circulate through that forest of masts, serving the purpose of carriages in that maritime city, and disturb in their swift progress through the waves clouds of albatrosses, which, like beautiful white pigeons, rise from the sea on their approach, to descend and repose again on the unruffled surface. It is impossible to count the vessels which lie on the water from the Seraglio Point to the suburb of Eyoub and the delicious valley of the Sweet Waters. The Thames at London exhibits nothing comparable to it."—Vol. ii. 262-265.

"Beautiful as the European side of the Bosphorus is, the Asiatic is infinitely more striking. It owes nothing to man, but everything to nature. There is neither a Buyukdéré nor a Therapia, nor palaces of ambassadors, nor an Armenian nor Frank city; there is nothing but mountains with glens which separate them; little valleys enamelled with green, which lie at the foot of overhanging rocks; torrents which enliven the scene with their foam; forests which darken it by their shade, or dip their boughs in the waves; a variety of forms, of tints, and of foliage, which equally the pencil of the painter is unable to represent and the pen of the poet to describe. A few cottages perched on the summit of projecting rocks, or sheltered in the bosom of a deeply indented bay, alone tell you of the presence of man. The evergreen oaks hang in such masses over the waves that the boatmen glide under their branches, and often sleep cradled in their arms. Such is the character of the coast on the Asiatic side as far as the castle of Mahomet II., which seems to shut it in as closely as any Swiss lake. Beyond that, the character changes; the hills are less rugged, and descend in gentler slopes to the water's edge; charming little plains, checkered with fruit-trees and shaded by planes, frequently open; and the delicious Sweet Waters of Asia exhibit a scene of enchantment equal to any described in the Arabian Nights. Women, children, and black slaves in every variety of costume and colour; veiled ladies from Constantinople; cattle and buffaloes ruminating in the pastures; Arab horses clothed in the most sumptuous trappings of velvet and gold; caïques filled with Armenian and Circasian young women, seated under the shade or playing with their children, some of the most ravishing beauty, form a scene of variety and interest probably unique in the world."—Vol. iii. 331-332.

These are the details of the piece: here is the general impression:—

"One evening, by the light of a splendid moon, which was reflected from the sea of Marmora, and the violet summits of Mount Olympus, I sat alone under the cypresses of the 'Ladders of the Dead;' those cypresses which overshadow innumerable tombs of Mussulmans, and descend from the heights of Pera to the shores of the sea. No one ever passes at that hour: you would suppose yourself a hundred miles from the capital, if a confused hum, wafted by the wind, was not occasionally heard, which speedily died away among the branches of the cypress. These sounds weakened by distance; the songs of the sailors in the vessels; the stroke of the oars in the water; the drums of the military bands in the barracks; the songs of the women who lulled their children to sleep; the cries of the muetzelim, who, from the summits of the minarets, called the faithful to evening prayers; the evening gun which boomed across the Bosphorus, the signal of repose to the fleet: all these sounds combined to form one confused murmur, which strangely contrasted with the perfect silence around me, and produced the deepest impression. The Seraglio, with its vast peninsula,

dark with plane-trees and cypresses, stood forth like a promontory of forests between the two seas which slept beneath my eyes. The moon shone on the numerous kiosks : and the old walls of the palace of Amurath stood forth like huge rocks from the obscure gloom of the plane-trees. Before me was the scene, in my mind was the recollection of all the glorious and sinister events which had there taken place. The impression was the strongest, the most overwhelming which a sensitive mind could receive. All was there mingled—man and God, society and nature, mental agitation, the melancholy repose of thought. I know not whether I participated in the great movement of associated beings who enjoy or suffer in that mighty assemblage, or in that nocturnal slumber of the elements, which murmured thus, and raised the mind above the cares of cities and empires into the bosom of nature and of God.”—Vol. iii. 283-284.

“ Il faut du tems,” says Voltaire, “ pour que les grandes réputations murissent.” As a describer of nature, we place Lamartine at the head of all writers, ancient or modern—above Scott and Chateaubriand, Madame de Staël and Humboldt. He aims at a different object from any of these great writers. He does not, like them, describe the emotion produced on the mind by the contemplation of nature ; he paints the objects in the scene itself, their colours and traits, their forms and substance, their lights and shadows. A painter following exactly what he portrays, would make a glorious gallery of landscapes. He is, moreover, a charming poet, an eloquent debater, and has written many able and important works on politics ; yet we never recollect, during the last twenty years, to have heard his name mentioned in English society except once, when an old and caustic, but most able judge, now no more, said, “ I have been reading Lamartine’s *Travels in the East* : it seems a perfect rhapsody.”*

We must not suppose, however, from this, that the English nation is incapable of appreciating the highest degree of eminence in the fine arts, or that we are never destined to rise to excellence in any but the mechanical. It is the multitude of subordinate writers of moderate merit who obstruct all the avenues to great distinction, which really occasions the phenomenon. Strange as it may appear, it is a fact abundantly proved by literary history, and which may be verified by every day’s experience, that men are in general insensible to the highest class of intellectual merit when it first appears ; and that it is by slow

* Since this was written, he has become abundantly celebrated and known by his share in the Revolution of 1848 at Paris.

degrees and the opinion oft repeated, of the really superior in successive generations, that it is at length raised to its deserved and lasting pedestal. There are instances to the contrary, such as Scott and Byron; but they are the exceptions, not the rule. We seldom do justice but to the dead. Contemporary jealousy, literary envy, general timidity, the dread of ridicule, the confusion of rival works, form so many obstacles to the speedy acquisition of a great living reputation. To the illustrious of past ages, however, we pay a universal and willing homage. Contemporary genius appears with a twinkling and uncertain glow, like the shifting and confused lights of a great city seen at night from a distance: while the spirits of the dead shine with an imperishable lustre, far removed in the upper firmament from the distractions of the rivalry of a lower world.

THE ROMAN CAMPAGNA

[BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, MARCH 1846]

THERE is no district in Europe which is more remarkable, or has more strongly impressed the minds of men in modern times, than the ROMAN CAMPAGNA. Independent of the indelible associations with which it is connected, and the glorious deeds of which it has been the theatre, its appearance produces an extraordinary impression on the mind of the beholder. All is silent; the earth seems struck with sterility; desolation reigns in every direction. A space extending from Otricoli to Terracina, above sixty miles in length, and on an average twenty in breadth, between the Apennines and the sea, containing nearly four thousand square miles, in the finest part of Italy, does not maintain a single peasant.* A few tombs lining the great roads which issued from the forum of Rome to penetrate to the remotest parts of her immense empire; the gigantic remains of aqueducts striding across the plain, which once brought, and some of which still bring, the pellucid fountains of the Apennines to the Eternal City, alone attest the former presence of man. Nothing bespeaks his present existence. Not a field is ploughed, not a blade of corn grows, hardly a house is to be seen, in this immense and dreary expanse. On entering it, you feel as if you were suddenly transported from the garden of Europe to the wilds of Tartary. Shepherds armed with long lances, as on the steppes of the Don, and mounted on small and hardy horses, alone are occasionally seen, following or searching in the wilds for the herds of savage buffaloes

* The Agro Romano, the Sabina, the Campagna Maritima, and the Patrimonio di San Pietro, which make up the Campagna of Rome, contain 3881 square miles, or about 3,000,000 acres.—SISMONDI'S *Essais*, ii. 10.

and cattle which pasture the district. The few living beings to be met with at the post-houses have the squalid melancholy look which attests permanent wretchedness, and the ravages of an unhealthy atmosphere.

But though the curse of Providence seems to have fallen on the land, so far as the human race is concerned, it is otherwise with the power of physical nature. Vegetation yearly revives with undiminished vigour. It is undecayed since the days of Cincinnatus and the Sabine farm. Every spring the expanse is covered with a carpet of flowers, which enamel the turf and conceal the earth with a profusion of varied beauty. So rich is the herbage which springs up with the alternate heats and rains of summer, that it becomes in most places rank, and the enormous herds which wander over the expanse are unable to keep it down. In autumn this rich grass becomes russet-brown, and a melancholy hue clothes the slopes which environ the Eternal City. The Alban Mount, when seen from a distance, clothed as it is with forests, vineyards, and villas, resembles a green island rising out of a sombre waste of waters. In the Pontine Marshes, where the air is so poisonous in the warm months that it is dangerous, and felt as oppressive by even the passing traveller, the prolific powers of nature are still more remarkable. Vegetation there springs up with the rapidity, and flourishes with the luxuriance, of tropical climates. Tall reeds, in which the buffaloes are hid, in which a rhinoceros might lie concealed, spring up in the numerous pools or deep ditches with which the dreary flat surface is sprinkled. Wild vines of extraordinary fecundity grow in the woods, and ascend in luxuriant masses to the tops of the tallest trees. Nearer the sea, a band of noble chestnuts and ever-green oaks attests the richness of the soil, which is capable of producing such magnificent specimens of vegetable life; and over the whole plain the extraordinary richness of the herbage, and luxuriance of the aquatic plants, bespeaks a region which, if subjected to a proper culture and improvement, would, like the Delta of Egypt, reward eighty and a hundred fold the labours of the husbandman.

It was not thus in former times. The Campagna now so desolate, the Pontine Marshes now so lonely, were then covered with inhabitants. Veii, long the rival of Rome,

and which was only taken, after a siege as protracted as that of Troy, by Camillus at the head of fifty thousand men, stood only ten miles from the Capitol. The Pontine marshes were inhabited by thirty nations. The freehold of Cincinnatus, the Sabine farm, stood in the now desolate plain at the foot of the Alban Mount. So rich were the harvests, so great the agricultural booty to be gathered in the plains around Rome, that for two hundred years after the foundation of the city, it was the great object of their foreign wars to gain possession of it, and on that account they were generally begun in autumn. Montesquieu has observed, that it was the long and desperate wars which the Romans, stimulated in general by this motive, carried on for three centuries with the Sabines, Latins, Veientes, and other people in their neighbourhood, which by slow degrees gave them the hardihood and discipline which enabled them afterwards to subdue the world. The East was an easy conquest ; the Gauls themselves could be repelled, Hannibal in the end overcome, after the tribes of Latium had been vanquished. But the district in which the hardy races dwelt, who so long repelled and maintained a doubtful conflict with the future masters of the world, is now a desert. It could not in its whole extent furnish men to fill a Roman cohort. Rome has emerged from its long decay after the fall of the Western Empire ; the terrors of the Vatican, the shrine of St Peter, have again attracted the world to the Eternal City ; and the most august edifice ever raised by the hands of man to the purposes of religion, has been reared within its walls. But the desolate Campagna is still unchanged.

Novelists and romance-writers have for centuries exhausted their imaginative and descriptive powers in developing the feelings which this extraordinary phenomenon, in the midst of the classic land of Italy, awakens. They have spoken of desolation as the fitting shroud of departed greatness ; of the mournful feelings which arise on approaching the seat of lost empire ; of the shades of the dead alone tenanting the scene of so much glory. Such reflections arise unbidden in the mind ; the most unlettered traveller is struck with the melancholy impression. An eloquent Italian has described this striking spectacle :—“ A vast solitude, stretching for

miles, as far as the eye can reach. No shelter, no resting-place, no defence for the wearied traveller ; a dead silence, interrupted only by the sound of the wind which sweeps over the plain, or the trickling of a natural fountain by the wayside ; not a cottage nor the curling of smoke to be seen ; only here and there a cross on a projecting eminence to mark the spot of a murder ; and all this in gentle slopes, dry and fertile plains, and up to the gates of a great city.”* The sight of the long lines of ruined aqueducts traversing the deserted Campagna, of the tombs scattered along the lines of the ancient *chaussées* across its dreary expanse, of the dome of St Peter’s alone rising in solitary majesty over its lonely hills, forcibly impress the mind, and produce an impression which no subsequent events or lapse of time are able to efface. At this moment the features of the scene, the impression it produces, are as present to the mind of the writer as when they were first seen thirty years ago.

But, striking as these impressions are, the Roman Campagna is fraught with instruction of a more valuable kind. It stands there, not only a monument of the past, but a beacon for the future. It is fraught with instruction, not only to the ancient but to the modern world. The most valuable lessons of political wisdom which antiquity has bequeathed to modern times, are to be gathered amidst its solitary ruins.

In investigating the causes of this extraordinary desolation of a district, in ancient times the theatre of such busy industry, and which for centuries maintained so great and flourishing a rural population, there are several observations to be made on the principle, as logicians call it, of *exclusion*, in order to clear the ground before the real cause is arrived at.

The first of these is, that the causes, whatever they are, which produced the desolation of the Campagna, had begun to operate, and their blasting effect was felt, in *ancient* times, and long before a single squadron of the barbarians had crossed the Alps. In fact, the Campagna was a scene of active agricultural industry only so long as Rome was contending with its redoubtable Italian neighbours—the Latins, the Etruscans, the Samnites, and the Cisalpine

* Barbieri à Sismondi—SISMONDI’S *Essais*, ii. 11.

Gauls. From the time that, by the conquest of Carthage, they obtained the mastery of the shores of the Mediterranean, *agriculture* in the neighbourhood of Rome began to decline. Pasturage was found to be a more profitable employment of estates ; and the vast supplies of grain, required for the support of the citizens of Rome, were obtained by importation from Libya and Egypt, where they could be raised at a less expense. "At, Hercule," says Tacitus, "*olim ex Italiâ legionibus longinquas in provincias commeatus portabantur ; nec nunc infecunditate laboratur : sed Africam potius et Egyptum exercemus, navibusque et casibus vita populi Romani permissa est.*"* The expense of cultivating grain in a district where provisions and wages were high because money was plentiful, speedily led to the abandonment of tillage in the central parts of Italy, when the unrestrained importation of grain from Egypt and Libya, where it could be raised at less expense in consequence of the extension of the Roman dominion over those regions, took place. "More lately," says Sismondi, "the gratuitous distributions of grain made to the Roman people rendered the cultivation of grain in Italy still more unprofitable : it then became absolutely impossible for the little proprietors to maintain themselves in the neighbourhood of Rome ; they became insolvent, and their patrimonies were sold to the rich. Gradually the abandonment of agriculture extended from one district to another. The true country of the Romans—central Italy—*had scarcely achieved the conquest of the globe, when it found itself without an agricultural population.* In the provinces, peasants were no longer to be found to recruit the legions—as few corn-fields to nourish them. Vast tracts of pasturage, where a few slave shepherds conducted herds of thousands of horned cattle, had supplanted the nations who had brought their greatest triumphs to the Roman people."† These great herds of cattle were then, as now, in the hands of a few great proprietors. This was loudly complained of, and signalised as the cancer which would ruin the Roman

* TACITUS, *Annal.* xii. 43. "But, by Hercules, formerly provisions were sent for the legions from Italy into distant provinces ; nor even now is it afflicted by sterility : but we prefer purchasing it from Africa and Egypt, and the lives of the Roman people have been committed to ships and the chances of the waves."

† SISMONDI, *Essais*, ii. 25.

empire, even so early as the time of Pliny. “*Verumque confitentibus,*” says he, “*latifundia perdidere Italiam; imo ac provincias.*”*

All the historians of the decline and fall of the Roman empire, have concurred in ascribing to these two causes—viz. the decay of agriculture and ruin of the agricultural population in Italy, and the consequent engrossing of estates in the hands of the rich—the ruin of its mighty dominion. But it is not generally known how widespread had been the desolation thus produced—how deep and incurable the wounds inflicted on the vitals of the state by the simple consequences of its extension, which enabled the grain growers of the distant provinces of the empire to supplant the cultivators of its heart by the unrestricted admission of foreign corn, before the invasion of the northern nations commenced. In fact, the evil was done before they appeared on the passes of the Alps; it was the weakness thus brought on the central provinces which rendered them unable to contend with enemies whom they had often, in former times, repelled and subdued. A few quotations, from historians of authority, will at once establish this important proposition.

“*Since the age of Tiberius,*” says Gibbon, “the decay of agriculture had been felt in Italy; and it was a just subject of complaint, that the lives of the Roman people depended on the accidents of the winds and the waves. In the division and decline of the empire, *the tributary harvests of Egypt and Africa* were withdrawn; the numbers of the inhabitants continually diminished with the means of subsistence; and the country was exhausted by the irretrievable losses of war, pestilence, and famine. Pope Gelasius was a subject of Odoacer, and he affirms, with strong exaggeration, that in Emilia, Tuscany, and the adjacent provinces, the human species was almost extirpated.”† Again, the same accurate author observes in another place—“Under the emperors the agriculture of the Roman provinces was *insensibly ruined*; and the government was obliged to make a merit of remitting tributes

* “To confess the truth, the great estates have ruined Italy; ay, and the provinces too.”—PLINY, l. xviii. c. 6.

† GIBBON, vi. c. 36.

which *their subjects were utterly unable to pay*. Within sixty years of the death of Constantine, and on the evidence of an actual survey, an exemption was granted in favour of three hundred and thirty thousand English acres of desert and uncultivated land *in the fertile and happy Campania*, which amounted to an eighth of the whole province. As the footsteps of the barbarians had not yet been seen in Italy, the cause of *this amazing desolation, which is recorded in the laws*,* can be ascribed only to the administration of the Roman emperors.”†

The two things which, beyond all question, occasioned this extraordinary decline of domestic agriculture in Italy before the invasion of the barbarians commenced, were the weight of *direct taxation*, and the *decreasing value of agricultural produce*, owing to the constant importation of grain from Egypt and Libya, where, from the cheapness of labour and the fertility of the soil in those remote provinces, grain could be raised at a much less cost than in the neighbourhood of Rome. So burdensome did the first become, that Gibbon tells us, that, in the time of Constantine, in Gaul it amounted to *nine pounds sterling of gold* on every freeman.‡ The periodical distribution of grain to the populace of Rome, all of which, from its greater cheapness, was brought by the government from Egypt and Africa, utterly extinguished the market for corn to the Italian farmers, though Rome, at its capture by Alaric, still contained 1,200,000 inhabitants. “All the efforts of the Christian emperors,” says Michelet, “to arrest the depopulation of the country, were as nugatory as those of their heathen predecessors had been. Sometimes, alarmed at the depopulation, they tried to mitigate the lot of the farmer, to shield him against the landlord; upon this the proprietor exclaimed, *he could no longer pay the taxes*. At other times they strove to chain the cultivators to the soil; but they became bankrupts or fled, and the land became deserted. Pertinax granted an immunity of taxes to such *cultivators from distant provinces* as would occupy the deserted lands of Italy. Aurelian did the same. Probus, Maximian, and Constantine were

* “Quingena viginti millia quadringentique jugera quæ Campania provincia, juxta inspectorum relationem, in desertis et squalidis locis habere dignoscitur, eisdem provincialibus concessum.”—*Cod. Theod.* ix. c. 38, c. 2.

† GIBBON, iii. c. 18.

‡ *Ibid.* iii. 88. c. 17.

obliged to transport men and oxen from Germany to cultivate Gaul. But all was in vain. *The desert extended daily.* The people in the fields surrendered themselves in despair, as a beast of burden lies down beneath his load and refuses to rise.”*

Gibbon has told us what it was which occasioned this constant depopulation of the country, and ruin of agriculture in the Italian provinces. “The Campagna of Rome,” says he, “about the close of the sixth century, was reduced to a state of *dreary wilderness*, in which the air was infectious, the land barren, and the waters impure. Yet the number of citizens still exceeded the measure of subsistence; *their precarious food was supplied from the harvest of Libya and Egypt*; and the frequent recurrence of famine betrayed the inattention of the emperor at Constantinople to the wants of a distant province.”† Nor was Italy the only province in the heart of the empire which was ruined by these foreign importations. Greece suffered not less severely under it. “In the latter stages of the empire,” says Michelet, “*Greece was supported almost entirely by corn raised in the plains of Poland.*”‡

These passages, to which, did our limits permit, innumerable others to the same purpose might be added, explain the causes of the decay and ultimate ruin of agriculture in the central provinces of the Roman empire, as clearly as if one had arisen from the dead to unfold it. It was the weight of *direct taxation*, and the want of remunerating prices to the *grain cultivators*, which occasioned the evil. The first arose from the experienced impossibility of raising additional taxes on industry by indirect taxation: the consequence, partly, of the contraction of the currency, owing to the habits of hoarding which the frequent incursions of the barbarians produced, and of the great decline in the produce of the mines of gold and silver in the latter periods of the empire; partly from the free importation of African grain, which the extension of the empire over its northern provinces, and the clamours of the Roman populace for cheap bread, occasioned. The second arose directly from that importation itself. The Italian cultivator, oppressed

* MICHELET, *Histoire de France*, i. 104-108.

† GIBBON, viii. c. xiv.

‡ MICHELET, *Histoire de France*, i. 277.

with direct taxes, and tilling a comparatively churlish soil, found himself utterly unable to compete with the African cultivators, with whom the process of production was so much cheaper, owing to the superior fertility of the soil under the sun of Libya, or the fertilising floods of the Nile. Thence the increasing weight of direct taxation, the augmented importation of foreign grain, the disappearance of free cultivators in the central provinces, the impossibility of recruiting the legions with freemen, and the ruin of the empire.

And that it was something pressing upon the cultivation of *grain*, not of agriculture generally, which occasioned these disastrous results, is decisively proved by the fact that, down to the fall of the empire, the cultivation of land *in pasturage* continued to be a *highly profitable* employment in Italy. It is recorded by Olympiodorus, that, when Rome was taken by Alaric, it was inhabited by 1,200,000 persons, who were maintained almost entirely by the expenditure of 1780 patrician families holding estates in Italy and Africa, many of whom had above £160,000 yearly of rent from land, besides a third more paid in corn and wine, being above £200,000 a-year. Their estates were almost entirely managed in pasturage, and conducted by slaves.* Here then is decisive evidence that, down to the very close of the empire, the managing of estates *in pasturage* was not only profitable, but eminently so, in Italy—though all attempts at raising grain were hopeless. It is not an unprofitable cultivation which can yield £200,000 a-year, equivalent to above £400,000 annually of our money, to a single proprietor, and support 1700 of them in such affluence that they maintained, in ease and luxury, a city not then the capital of the empire, containing 1,200,000 inhabitants, or considerably more than Paris at this time. It was not slavery, therefore, which ruined Italian cultivation; for the whole pasture cultivation which yielded such immense profits was conducted by slaves. It was the Libyan and Egyptian harvests, freely imported into the Tiber, which destroyed agriculture in the Latian plains; and, with the consequent extinction of the race of rural freemen, brought on the

* OLYMPIODORUS *apud* PHOTIUM, p. 197. See also GIBBON, c. 31, and vi. 264.

ruin of the empire. But this importation could not injure pasturage; for cattle, Africa, dried up by its burning sun, had none, and therefore estates in grass still continued to yield great returns.

The second circumstance worthy of notice in this inquiry is, that the cause of the present desolation of the Campagna, whatever it is, is something which is *peculiar to that district*, and has continued to act with as great force in *modern* as in ancient times. It is historically known, indeed, that the sanguinary contests of the rival houses of Orsini and Colonna, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, produced the most dreadful ravages in the Campagna, and extinguished, for the time at least, any attempts to reclaim or restore to cultivation that desolate region. But many centuries have elapsed since this desolating warfare has entirely ceased; and, under the shelter of peace and tranquillity, agricultural industry in other parts of Italy has flourished to such a degree as to render it the garden of the world: witness the rich plain of Lombardy, the incomparable terrace cultivation of the Tuscan hills, the triple harvests of the Terra di Lavoro, near Naples. The desolation of the Campagna, therefore, must have been owing to some causes peculiar to the Roman States, or rather to that part of those states which adjoins the city of Rome; for in other parts of the ecclesiastical territories, particularly in the vicinity of Ancona, and the slope of the Apennines towards Bologna, agriculture is in the most flourishing state. The hills and declivities are there cut out into terraces, and cultivated with garden husbandry in as perfect a style as in the mountains of Tuscany. The Marches of Ancona contain 426,222 inhabitants, spread over 2111 square miles, which is about 200 to the square mile; but, considering how large a part of the territory is barren rock, the proportion on the fertile parts is about 300 to the square mile, while the average of England is only 260. The soil is cultivated to the depth of two and three feet.* It is in vain, therefore, to say that it is the oppression of the Papal government, the indolence of the cardinals, and the evils of an elective monarchy, which have been the causes of the ruin of agricultural industry in the vicinity of

* SISMONDI'S *Essais*, ii. 57.

Rome. These causes operate just as strongly in the other parts of the Papal States, where cultivation, instead of being in a languishing, is in the most flourishing condition. In truth, so far from having neglected agriculture in this blasted district, the Papal government, for the last two centuries, has made greater efforts to encourage it than all the other powers of Italy put together. Every successive Pope has laboured at the Pontine Marshes, but in vain. Nothing can be more clear, than that the causes which have destroyed agriculture in the Campagna, are some which were known in the days of the Roman Republic; gradually came into operation with the extension of the empire; and have continued in modern times to press upon this particular district of the Papal States, in a much greater degree than among other provinces of a similar extent in Italy.

The last circumstance which forces itself upon the mind, in the outset of this inquiry, is, that the desolation of the Campagna is owing to moral or political, not physical causes. Naturalists and physicians have exhausted all their energies for centuries in investigating the causes of the *malaria*, which is now felt with such severity in Rome in the autumnal months, and renders health so precarious there at that period; and the soil has been analysed by the most skilful chemists, to see whether there is any peculiarity in the earth, from its volcanic character, which either induces sterility in the crops, or proves fatal to the cultivators. But nothing has been discovered that in the slightest degree explains the phenomena. There is no doubt that the Campagna is extremely unhealthy in the autumnal months, and the Pontine Marshes still more so; but that is no more than is the case with every low plain on the shores of the Mediterranean: it obtains in Lombardy, Greece, Sicily, Asia Minor, and Spain, as well as in the Agro Romano. If any one doubt it, let him lie down to sleep in his cloak in any of these places in a night of September, and see what state he is in in the morning. Clarke relates, that intermittent fevers are universal in the Grecian plains in the autumnal months: in Estremadura, in September 1811, on the banks of the Guadiana, nine thousand men fell sick in Wellington's army in three days.

The savannas of America, where "death bestrides the evening gale," when first ploughed up, produce intermittent fevers far more deadly than the malaria of the Roman Campagna. But the energy of man overcomes the difficulty, and, ere a few years have passed away, health and salubrity prevail in the regions of former pestilence. It was the same with the Roman Campagna in the early days of the Republic; it is the same now with the Campagna of Naples, and the marshy plains around Parma and Lodi, to the full as unhealthy in a desert state as the environs of Rome. It would be the same with the Agro Romano, if moral causes did not step in to prevent the efforts and industry of man from here, as elsewhere, correcting the insalubrity of uncultivated nature.

And for decisive evidence that this desolation of the Campagna is owing to moral or political, not physical causes, and that, under a different system of administration, it might be rendered as salubrious and populous as it was in the early days of the Roman Republic, reference may be made to the fact, that in many parts of Italy, equally unhealthy and in this desert state, cultivation has taken place, a dense population has arisen, and the dangerous qualities of the atmosphere have disappeared. Within the last twenty years, the district called Grosseté has been reclaimed, in the most pestilential part of the Maremma of Tuscany, by an industrious population, which has succeeded in introducing agriculture and banishing the malaria; and the ruins of the Roman villas on the banks of the Tiber, near the sea, prove that the Romans went to seek salubrity and the healthful breezes of the sea, where now they could meet with nothing but pestilence and death. The rocky and dry slopes of the Campagna are admirably adapted for raising olives and vines; while the difference of the soil and exposure, in different places, promises a similar variety in their wines. The Pontine Marshes themselves, and the vast plain which extends from them to the foot of the cluster of hills called the Alban Mount, are not more oppressed by water, or lower in point of level, than the plains of Pisa; and yet there the earth yields magnificent crops of grain and succulent herbs; while the poplars, by which the fields are intersected, support to their very summits the most luxuriant

vines. The Campagna of Naples is more volcanic and level than that of Rome. The hills and valleys of Baiæ are nothing but the cones and craters of extinguished volcanoes; and if we would see what such a district becomes when left in a desert state, we have only to go to the Maremma of Pæstum, now as desolate and unhealthy as the Pontine Marshes themselves. But in the Campagna of Naples an industrious population has overcome all these obstacles, and rendered the land, tenanted only by wild boars and buffaloes in the fourth century, the garden of Europe, known over all the world, from its riches, by the name of the Campagna Felice.

Nay, the Agro Romano itself affords equally decisive proof that, where circumstances will permit the work of cultivation to be commenced so as to be carried on at a profit, the malaria and desolation speedily disappear before the persevering efforts of human industry. In many parts of the district, the custom of granting perpetual leases at a fixed rate prevails—the *Emphyteutis* of the Roman law, the source of the prosperity of the cultivators in Upper and Lower Austria, and well known in Scotland under the name of feus. Sismondi has given the following account of the effect of the establishment of a permanent interest in the soil in arresting the effects of the malaria, and spreading cultivation over the land:—"The Emphyteutic cultivator has a permanent interest in the soil: he labours, therefore, unceasingly for the good of his family. He cuts out his slope into terraces, covers it with trees, fruits, and garden-stuffs: he takes advantage of every leisure moment, either in himself, his wife, or children, to advance the common cultivation. Industry and abundance reign around. Whenever you ascend the volcanic hills of Latium, or visit those ravishing slopes which so many painters have illustrated, around the lakes of Castel Gandolfo or Nemi, at L'Aricia, Rocca di Papa, Marino, and Frascati; whenever you meet with a smiling cultivation, healthy air, and the marks of general abundance, you may rest assured the cultivator is proprietor of the fruits of the soil. The bare right of property, or superiority, as the lawyers term it, belongs to some neighbouring lord; but the real property, 'il miglioramento,' belongs to the cultivator. In this way, in these happy dis-

tricts, the great estates—the *latifundia* of Pliny—have been practically distributed among the peasantry; and whenever this is the case, you hear no more of the malaria. Agriculture has caused to arise in those localities a numerous population, which multiplies with singular rapidity, and for ages has furnished cultivators not only for the mountains where it has arisen, but bands of adventurers, who in every age have filled the ranks of the Italian armies.”*

But while those examples, to which, did our limits permit, many others might be added, decisively demonstrate that human industry can effectually overcome the physical difficulties or dangers of the Roman Campagna; yet it is clear that some great and overwhelming cause is at work, which prevents agriculture flourishing, by means of tenants or *métayers*, in the plains of the Campagna. The plains, it is true, are in the hands of a few great proprietors; but their tenants are extremely rich, often more so, Sismondi tells us, than their landlords. What is it, then, which for so long a period has chained the Campagna to pasturage, and rendered all attempts to restore it to the plough abortive? The answer is plain: It is the same cause now which binds it to pasturage, which did so, under the Romans, from the time of Tiberius—*It is more profitable to devote the land to grass than to raise grain.* And it is so, not because the land will not bear grain crops, for it would do so now even better than it did in the days of the Etruscans and the Sabines, since so many centuries of intervening pasturage have added so much to its fertility. It is so, because the weakness of the Papal Government, yielding, like the Imperial in ancient days, to the cry for cheap bread among the Roman populace, has fed the people, from time immemorial, with *foreign grain, instead of that of its own territory.* The evidence on this subject is as clear and more detailed in modern, than it was in ancient times; and both throw a broad and steady light on the final results of that system of policy, which purchases the present support of the inhabitants of cities by sacrificing the only lasting and perennial sources of strength derived from the industry and population of the country.

During the confusion and disasters consequent on the fall of the Empire, after the capture of Rome by the Goths, the

* SISMONDI'S *Essais*, ii. 33.

Campagna remained entirely a desert ; but it continued in the hands of the successors of the great senatorial families who held it in the last days of the Empire. “The Agro Romano,” says Sismondi, “almost a desert, had been long exposed to the ravages of the barbarians, who, in 846, pillaged the Vatican, which led Pope Leo IV., in the following year, to enclose that building within the walls of Rome. For a hundred years, almost all the hills which border the horizon from Rome were crowned with forts ; the ancient walls of the Etruscans were restored, or rebuilt from their ruins ; the old hill-strengths, where the Sabines, the Hernici, the Volscians, the Coriolani, had formerly defended their independence, again offered asylums to the inhabitants of the plains. But the great estates, the bequest of ancient Rome, remained undivided. With the first dawn of history in the middle ages, we see the great house of the Colonna master of the towns of Palestrina, Genazzano, Zagorole ; that of Orsini, of the territories of the republics of Veii and Ceres, and holding the fortresses of Bracciano, Anguetta, and Ceri. The Monte-Savili, near Albano, still indicates the possessions of the Savili, which comprehended the whole ancient kingdom of Turnus ; the Frangipani were masters of Antium, Astura, and the sea-coast ; the Gaetani, the Annibaldeschi, of the castles which overlook the Pontine Marshes ; while Latium was in the hands of a smaller number of feudal families than it had formerly numbered republics within its bounds.”*

But while divided among these great proprietors, the Roman Campagna was still visited, as in the days of the emperors, with the curse of cheap grain, imported from the other states bordering on the Mediterranean, and was in consequence exclusively devoted to the purposes of pasturage. An authentic document proves that this was the case so far down as the fifteenth century. In the year 1471, Pope Sixtus IV. issued a bull, which was again enforced by Clement VII. in 1523, and which bore these remarkable words :—“Considering the frequent famines to which Rome has been exposed in late years, *arising chiefly from the small amount of lands which have been sown or laid down in tillage*, and that their owners *prefer allowing them to*

* SISMONDI'S *Essais*, ii. 29, 30.

remain uncultivated, and pastured only by cattle, than to cultivate for the use of men, on the ground that the latter mode of management is more profitable than the former." * The decree ordered the cultivation of a large portion of the Campagna in grain under heavy penalties.

And that this superior profit of pasturage to tillage has continued to the present time, and is the real cause of the long-continued and otherwise inexplicable desolation of this noble region, has been clearly demonstrated by a series of important and highly interesting official decrees and investigations, which, within this half century, have taken place by order of the Papal government. Struck with the continued desolation of so large and important a portion of their territory, the Popes have both issued innumerable edicts to enforce tillage, and set on foot the most minute inquiries to ascertain the causes of their failure. It is only necessary to mention one. Pius VI., in 1783, took a new and most accurate survey or *cadastre* of the Agro Romano, and ordained the proprietors to sow annually 17,000 *rubbi* (85,000 acres) with grain.† This decree, however, like those which had preceded it, was not carried into execution. "The proprietors and farmers," says Nicolai, "equally opposed themselves to its execution; the former declaring that they must have a higher rent for the land if laid down in tillage, than the latter professed themselves able to pay." ‡

To ascertain the cause of this universal and insurmountable resistance of all concerned to the cultivation of the Campagna, the Papal government in 1790 issued a commission to inquire into the matter, and the proprietors prescribe to two memoirs on the subject, which at once explained the whole difficulty. The one set forth the cost and returns of the grain cultivation of 100 *rubbi* (500 acres) in the Roman Campagna; the other, the cost and returns of a flock of 2500 sheep, supported on the same extent of land. The result of the whole was, that while the grain cultivation would with difficulty, on an expenditure of 8000 crowns (£2000,) bring in a clear profit of *thirty crowns* (£7, 10s.) to the farmer, and nothing at all to the landlord, the pasturage would yield between

* NICOLAI, *Dell' Agro Romano*, ii. 30, 31.

† The *rubbi* is equal to two French hectares, or five English acres.

‡ NICOLAI, iii. 133.

them a profit of 1972 crowns, (£496.)* Well may Sismondi exclaim,—“ These two reports are of the very highest importance. They explain the constant, invincible resistance which the proprietors and farmers of the Roman Campagna have opposed to the extension of grain cultivation; they put in a clear light the opposite interest of great capitalists and the interest of the state; they give authentic details, which I have personally verified, and found to be still entirely applicable and correct, on the causes which have reduced the noble district of the Roman Campagna to its desolate state, and still retain it in that condition. Incredible as the statements may appear, they are amply borne out by everyday experience. In effect, all the farmers whom I have consulted affirm, that they invariably lose by grain cultivation; and that they never resort to it, but to prevent the land from being overgrown by brushwood or forests, and rendered unfit for profitable pasturage.”†

Extraordinary as these facts are, as to the difference between the profits of pasturage and of tillage in the Agro Romano, it is only by the most rigid economy, and reducing the shepherds to the lowest amount of subsistence consistent with the support of life, that the former yields any profit at all. The wages of the shepherds are only fifty-three francs (£2) for the winter season, and as much for the summer; the proprietors, in addition, furnishing them with twenty ounces of bread a-day, a half-pound of salt meat, a little oil and salt a-week. As to wine, vinegar, or fermented liquors, they never taste any of them from one year's end to another. Such as it is, their food is all brought to them from Rome; for in the whole Campagna there is not an oven, a kitchen, or a kitchen-garden, to furnish an ounce of vegetables or fruits. The clothing of these shepherds is as wretched as their fare. It consists of sheepskin, with the wool outside; a few rags on their legs and thighs complete their vesture. Lodging or houses they have none; they sleep in the open air, or nestle into some sheltered nook among the ruined tombs or aqueducts which are to be met with in the wilderness, in some of the caverns, which are so common in that volcanic region, or beneath the arches of the ancient catacombs. A few spoons and coarse jars form their

* NICOLAI, c. iii. 167, *et subseq.*

† SISMONDI'S *Essais*, ii. 46, 47.

whole furniture : the cost of that belonging to twenty-nine shepherds, required for the 2500 sheep, is only 159 francs (£7.) The sum-total of the expense of the whole twenty-nine persons, including wages, food, and everything, is only 1038 crowns, or £250 a-year, being about £8, 10s. a-head annually. The produce of the flock is estimated at 7122 crowns (£1780) annually, and the annual profit 1972 crowns, or £493.*

The other table given by Nicolai exhibits, on a similar expenditure of capital, the profit of tillage ; and it is so inconsiderable as rarely, and that only in the most favourable situations, to cover the expense of cultivation. The labourers, who almost all come from the neighbouring hills, above the level of the malaria, are obliged to be brought from a distance at high wages for the time of their employment ; sometimes, in harvest, wages are as high as five francs, or four shillings a-day. The wages paid to the labourers on a grain farm, on which £2000 has been expended on 500 acres, amount to no less than 4320 crowns, or £1080 sterling, annually ; being above four times the cost of the shepherds for a similar expenditure of capital, though the latter wander over ten times the surface of ground. The labourers never remain in the fields ; they set off to the hills when the grain is sown, and only return in autumn to cut it down. They do not work above twenty or thirty days in the year ; and therefore, though their wages for that period are so high, they are in misery all the rest of the season. But though so little is done for the land, the price received for the produce is so low, that cultivation in grain brings no profit, and is usually carried on at a loss. The peasants who conduct it never go to Rome—have often never seen it ; they make no purchases there ; and *the most profitable of all trades in a nation, that between the town and the country, is unknown in the Roman States.*†

Here, then, the real cause of the desolation of the Campagna stands revealed in the clearest light, and on the most irrefragable evidence. It is not cultivated for grain crops, because remunerating prices for that species of produce cannot be obtained. It is exclusively kept in pasturage,

* NICOLAI, *Dell' Agro Romano*, iii. 167, 175.

† NICOLAI, iii. 174, 178.

because it is in that way only that a profit can be obtained from the land. And that it is this cause, and not any deficiency of capital or skill on the part of the tenantry, which occasions the phenomenon, is further rendered apparent by the wealth, enterprise, and information on agricultural subjects, of the great farmers in whose hands the land is vested. "The conductors," says Sismondi, "of rural labour in the Roman States, called *Mercanti di Tenute* or *di Campagne*, are men possessed of great capital, and who have received the very best education. Such, indeed, is their opulence, that it is probable they will ere long acquire the property of the land of which at present they are tenants. Their number, however, does not exceed eighty. They are acquainted with the most approved methods of agriculture in Italy and other countries; they have at their disposal all the resources of science, art, and immense capital; have availed themselves of all the boasted advantages of centralisation, of a thorough division of labour, of a most accurate system of accounts, and checking of inferior functionaries. The system of great farms has been carried to perfection in their hands. But, with all these advantages, they cannot in the Agro Romano, *once so populous, still so fertile, raise grain to a profit*. The labourers cost more than they are worth, more than their produce is worth; while on a soil not richer, and under the same climate and government, in the Marches of Ancona, agriculture maintains two hundred souls the square mile, in comfort and opulence."*

What, then, is the explanation which is to be given of this extraordinary impossibility of raising grain with a profit in the Roman Campagna; while, in a similar climate, and under greater physical disadvantages, it is in the neighbouring plains of Pisa, and the Campagna Felice of Naples, the most profitable of all species of cultivation, and therefore universally resorted to? The answer is obvious—It is the cry for cheap bread in Rome, the fatal bequest of the strength of the Imperial to the weakness of the Papal Government, which is the cause. It is the necessity under which the Ecclesiastical Government felt itself, of yielding everything to *the clamour for a constant supply of cheap bread for the people of the towns*, which has done the whole.

* SISMONDI'S *Essais*, ii. 56, 57.

It is the ceaseless importation of foreign grain into the Tiber by Government, to provide cheap food for the people, which has reduced the Campagna to a wilderness, and rendered Rome in modern, not less than Tadmor in ancient times, a city in the desert.

It has been already noticed, that in the middle of the fifteenth century Sextus IV. issued a decree, ordaining the proprietors of lands in the Campagna to lay down a third of their estates yearly in tillage. But the Papal Government, not resting on the proprietors of the soil, but mainly, in so far as temporal power went, on the populace of Rome, was under the necessity of making, at the same time, extraordinary efforts to obtain supplies of foreign grain. A free trade in grain was permitted to the Tiber, or rather the Government purchased foreign grain wherever they could find it cheapest—as the emperors had, from a similar apprehension, done in ancient times—and retailed it at a moderate price to the people. They became themselves the great corn-merchant. This system, of course, prevented the cultivation of the Campagna, and rendered the decree of Sextus IV. nugatory ; for no human laws can make men continue a course of labour at a loss to themselves. Thence the citizens of Rome came to depend entirely on foreign supplies of grain for their daily food ; and the consumption of the capital had no more influence on the agriculture of the adjoining provinces than it had on that of Hindostan or China. Again, as in the days of Tacitus, the lives of the Roman people were exposed to the chances of the winds and the waves. As this proved a fluctuating and precarious source of supply, a special board, styled the *Casa Annonaria*, was constituted by Government for the regular importation of foreign grain, and retailing of it at a fixed and low price to the people. This board has been in operation for nearly two hundred and fifty years ; and it is the system it has pursued which has prevented all attempts to cultivate the Campagna, by rendering it impossible to do so at a profit. The details of the proceedings of this board—this “*chamber of commerce*” of Rome—are so extremely curious and instructive, that we must give them in the authentic words of Nicolai :—

“ Having failed in all their attempts to bring about the

cultivation of the Campagna, the Popes of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries endeavoured to secure abundance in the markets by other means. The motive was legitimate and praiseworthy ; but the means taken failed in producing the desired effect, because they sacrificed the future to the present, and, *in the anxiety to secure the subsistence of the people, compromised those who raised food for them.* Pope Paul V., who reigned from 1605 to 1621, instituted the *Casa Annonaria* of the apostolic chamber, which was charged with the duty of providing subsistence for the inhabitants of Rome. This board being desirous, above all things, of avoiding seditions and discontent, established it as a principle, that whatever the cost of production was, or the price in a particular year, bread should be sold at certain public bakehouses at a certain price. This price was fixed at a Roman baiocco, a tenth more than the sous of France, ($\frac{1}{2}$ d. English,) for eight ounces of bread. *This price has now been maintained constantly the same for two hundred years ;* and it is still kept at the same level, with the difference only of a slight diminution in the weight of the bread sold for the *baiocco* in years of scarcity.

“ As a necessary consequence of this regulation, the apostolic chamber soon found itself under the necessity of taking entire possession of the commerce of grain. It not only bought up the whole which was to be obtained in the country, but provided for the public wants *by large importation.* Regulations for the import and export of grain were made by it ; sometimes, it was said, through the influence of those who solicited exemptions. Whether this was the case or not is uncertain, and not very material. What is certain is, that the rule by which the chamber was invariably regulated—viz., *that of consulting no other interest but that of the poor consumer*—is as vicious and ruinous as the one so much approved of now-a-days, of attending only to the interest of the proprietors and producers. Government, doubtless, should attend to the vital matter of the subsistence of the people ; but it should do so with a view to the interest of all, not a single section of society.

“ At what price soever bread was bought by them, the *Casa Annonaria* sold it to the bakers at seven Roman crowns (30 f.) the *rubbio*, which weighs 640 kilograms,

(1540 lb.) That price was not much different from the average one ; and the apostolic chamber sustained no great loss till 1763, by its extensive operations in the purchase and sale of grain. But at that period the price of wheat began to rise, and it went on continually advancing to the end of the century. Notwithstanding its annual losses, however, the apostolic chamber was too much afraid of public clamour to raise the price of bread. It went on constantly retailing it at the same price to the people ; and the consequence was, that its losses in 1797, when the Pontifical Government was overturned, had accumulated to no less than 17,457,485 francs, or £685,000.*

It might naturally have been imagined that, after so long an experience of the effects of a forcible reduction of the price of grain below the level at which it could be raised at a profit by home cultivators, the Ecclesiastical Government would have seen what was the root of the evil, and applied themselves to remedy it, by giving some protection to native industry. But though the evil of the desolation of the Campagna was felt in its full extent by Government in subsequent times, yet as the first step in the right course—viz., protecting native industry by stopping the sales of bread by Government at lower prices than it could be raised at home—was likely to occasion great discontent, it was never attempted. Such a step, dangerous in the firmest and best established, was impossible in an elective monarchy of old popes, feeble cardinals, and a despicable soldiery. They went on deploring the evil, but never once ventured to face the remedy. In 1802, Pius VII., a most public-spirited and active pontiff, issued an edict, in which he declared, “ We are firmly persuaded that, if we cannot succeed in applying a remedy, the abandonment and depopulation of the Campagna will go on increasing, till the country becomes a fearful desert. *Fatal experience leaves no doubt on that point.* We see around us, above all, in the Campagna, a number of estates entirely depopulated and abandoned to grass, which, in the memory of man, were rich in agricultural productions, and crowded with inhabitants, as is clearly established by the seignorial rights attached to them. Population had been introduced into these domains by

* NICOLAI, *Dell' Agro Romano*, iii. 153.

agriculture, which employed a multitude of hands, being in a flourishing state. But now the obstacles opposed to the interior commerce of grain, *and the forced prices fixed by Government, have caused agriculture to perish.* Pasturage has come everywhere to supplant it; and the great proprietors and farmers living in Rome have abandoned all thought of dividing their possessions among cultivators, and sought only to diminish the cost of the flocks to which they have devoted their estates. But if that system has proved profitable to them, it has been fatal to the state, which it has deprived of its true riches, the produce of agriculture, and of the industry of the rural population.* But it was all in vain. The measures adopted by Pius VII. to resuscitate agriculture in the Campagna have proved all nugatory, like those of all his predecessors; the importation of foreign grain into the Tiber, the forced prices at which it was sold by the Government at Rome, rendered it impossible to prosecute agriculture to a profit; and the Campagna has become, and still continues, a desert.†

Here, then, the real cause of the long-continued desolation of the Agro Romano, both in ancient and modern times, becomes perfectly apparent. It is the cry for cheap bread in Rome which has done the whole. To stifle this cry in the dreaded populace of the Eternal City, the emperors imported grain largely from Egypt and Libya, and distributed it at an elusory price, or gratuitously, to the people. The unrestricted importation of foreign grain, in consequence of those provinces becoming parts of the empire, enabled the cultivators and merchants of Africa to deluge the Italian harbours with corn at a far cheaper rate than it could be raised in Italy itself, where labour bore a much higher price, in consequence of money being more plentiful in the centre than at the extremities of the empire. All the purchases of grain for the Roman populace were made by the Government, alike under the emperors and the popes, in foreign states, because they got it cheaper than it could be raised at home. Thus the market of its towns was lost to the Italian cultivators, and gained to those of Egypt and Libya, where a vertical sun, or the floods of the Nile, rendered the

* *Motu Proprio de Pius VII.*—NICOLAI, ii. 163, 185.

† SISMONDI'S *Essais*, ii. 71.

expense of cultivation comparatively trifling. Pasturage became the only way in which land could be managed to advantage in the Italian fields; because live animals and dairy produce do not admit of being transported from a distance by sea, with a profit to the importer, and the sunburnt shores of Africa yielded no herbage for their support. Agriculture disappeared in Italy, and with it the free and robust arms which conducted it; pasturage succeeded, and yielded large rentals to the great proprietors, into whose hands, on the ruin of the little freeholders by foreign importation, the land had fallen. But pasturage could not nourish a bold peasantry to defend the state; it could only produce the riches which might attract its enemies. Hence the constant complaint, that Italy had ceased to be able to furnish soldiers to the legionary armies; hence the entrusting the defence of the frontier to mercenary barbarians, and the ruin of the empire.

In modern times the same ruinous system has been continued, and hence the continued desolation of the Campagna, so pregnant with weakness and evil to the Roman states. The people never forgot the distribution of grain by Government in the time of the emperors; the Papal authorities never had strength sufficient to withstand the menacing cry for cheap bread. Anxious to keep the peace in Rome, and depending little on the barons of the country, the Ecclesiastical Government saw no resource but to import grain themselves from any countries where they could get it cheapest, and sell it at a fixed price to the people. This price, down to 1763, was just the price at which *it could be imported with a fair profit*; as is proved by the fact that, down to that period, the *Casa Annonaria* sustained no loss. But it was lower than the rate at which it could be raised even in the fertile plains of the Campagna, where labour was dearer and taxes heavier than in Egypt and the Ukraine, from whence the grain was imported by Government; and consequently cultivation could not be carried on in the Agro Romano but at a loss. It of course ceased altogether; and the land, as in ancient times, has been entirely devoted to pasturage, to the extinction of the rural population, and to the infinite injury of the state.

And this explains how it has happened that, in other parts

of the Papal states, particularly in the Marches on the other side of the Apennines, between Bologna and Ancona, agriculture is not only noways depressed, but flourishing ; and the same is the case with the slopes of the Alban Mount, even in the Agro Romano. In the first situation, the necessity of bending to the cry for cheap bread in the urban population was not felt, as the Marches contained no great towns, and the weight of influence was in the rural inhabitants. Being inland provinces, the cost of transport took away the profit of importing grain from Egypt or Odessa. There was no *Casa Annonaria*, and no fixed price of bread there ; and therefore agriculture flourished as it did in Lombardy, the Campagna Felice of Naples, the plain of Pisa, or any other prosperous part of Italy. In the latter, it was in *garden cultivation* that the little proprietors, as in nearly the whole slopes of the Apennines, were engaged. The enchanting shores of the lakes of Gandolfo and Nemi, the hills around L'Aricia and Marino, are all laid out in the cultivation of grapes, olives, fruits, vegetables, and chestnuts. No competition from without was to be dreaded by them, as, at least until the introduction of steam, it was impossible to bring such productions by distant sea voyages, so as to compete with those raised in equally favourable situations within a few miles of the market at home. In these places, therefore, the peculiar evil which blasted all attempts at grain cultivation in the Campagna was not felt ; and hence, though in the Roman states, and subject, in other respects, to precisely the same government as the Agro Romano, they exhibit not merely a good, but the most admirable cultivation.

If any doubt could exist on this subject, it would be removed by two other facts connected with agriculture on the shores of the Mediterranean—one in ancient and one in modern times.

The first of these is, that, while agriculture declined in *Italy*, as has been shown, from the time of Tiberius, until at length nearly the whole plains of that peninsula were turned into grass, it, from the same date, took an extraordinary start in Spain and Libya. And to such a length had the improvement of Africa under the fostering influence of the market of Rome and Italy gone, that it contained, at the

time of its invasion by the Vandals under Genseric, in the year 430 of the Christian era, twenty millions of inhabitants, and had come to be regarded with reason as the garden of the human race. "The long and narrow tract," says Gibbon, "of the African coast was filled, when the Vandals approached its shores, with frequent monuments of Roman art and magnificence; and the respective degrees of improvement might be accurately measured by the distance from Carthage and the Mediterranean. A simple reflection will impress every thinking mind with the clearest idea of its fertility and cultivation. The country was extremely populous; the inhabitants reserved a liberal supply for their own use; and the annual exportation, PARTICULARLY OF WHEAT, was so regular and plentiful, that Africa deserved the name of the common granary of Rome and of mankind."* Nor had Spain flourished less during the long tranquillity and protection of the legions. In the year 409 after Christ, when it was first invaded by the barbarians, its situation is thus described by the great historian of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. "The situation of Spain, separated on all sides from the enemies of Rome by the sea, by the mountains, and by intermediate provinces, had secured the long tranquillity of that remote and sequestered country; and we may observe, as a sure symptom of domestic happiness, that, in a period of four hundred years, Spain furnished very few materials to the history of the Roman empire. The cities of Merida, Cordova, Seville, and Tarragona, were numbered with the most illustrious of the Roman world. The various plenty of the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms was improved and manufactured by the skill of an industrious people, and the peculiar advantages of naval stores contributed to support an extensive and profitable trade." And he adds, in a note, that many particulars relative to the *fertility* and trade of Spain may be found in Huet's *Commerce des Anciens*, c. 40, p. 228.†

These facts are very remarkable, and worthy of the most profound attention, for they point in a decisive manner—they afford the *experimentum crucis* as to the real cause of the long-continued and frightful decay of Italian agriculture

* GIBBON, chap. 33, vol. vi. p. 20.

† GIBBON, chap. 31, vol. v. p. 351.

during the reign of the emperors. For here it appears that, during the four hundred years that the Western Empire endured, while the cultivation of grain in Italy was constantly declining, and at last wholly ceased, insomuch that the country relapsed entirely into a state of nature, or was devoted to the mere raising of grass for sheep and cattle, *agriculture was flourishing in the highest degree in the remoter provinces of the Empire*; and the exportation of grain from Africa had become so great and regular, that it had come to be regarded as the granary of Rome and of the world! The government was the same, the slavery was the same, in Africa as in Italy. Yet in the one country agriculture rose, during four centuries, to the highest point of elevation; while in the other, during the same period, it sank to the lowest depression, until it became wellnigh extinct, so far as the raising of grain was concerned. How did this come to pass? It could not have been that the labour of slaves was too costly to raise grain; for it was raised at a great profit, and to a prodigious extent, *almost entirely by slaves*, in Egypt and Libya. What was it, then, which destroyed agriculture in Italy and Greece, while, under circumstances precisely similar in all respects *but one*, it was, at the very same time, rising to the very highest prosperity in Egypt, Libya, and Spain? Evidently *this one circumstance*, — that Italy and Greece were the heart of the empire, the theatre of long-established civilisation, the abode of opulence, the seat of wealth, the centre to which riches flowed from the extremities of the empire. Pounds were plentiful there, and consequently labour was dear; in the provinces pence were few, and therefore it was cheap. It was impossible, under a free trade in grain, for the one to compete with the other. It is for the same reason that agricultural labour is now fourpence a-day in Poland, tenpence in Ireland, and two shillings in Great Britain.

The peculiar conformation of the Roman empire, while it facilitated in many respects its growth and final settlement under the dominion of the Capitol, led by a process not less certain, and still more rapid, to its ruin, when that empire was fully extended. If any one will look at the map, he will see that the Roman empire spread outwards from the

shores of the Mediterranean. It embraced all the monarchies and republics which, in the preceding ages of the world, had grown up around that inland sea. Water, therefore, afforded the regular, certain, and cheap means of conveying goods and troops from one part of the empire to the other. Nature had spread out a vast system of internal navigation, which brought foreign trade in a manner to every man's door. The legions combated alternately on the plains of Germany, in the Caledonian woods, on the banks of the Euphrates, and at the foot of Mount Atlas. But much as this singular and apparently Providential circumstance aided the growth, and for a season increased the strength of the empire, it secretly but certainly undermined its resources, and in the end proved its ruin. The free trade in grain which it necessarily brought with it, when the same dominion stretched over all Spain and Africa, and long-continued peace had brought their crops to compete with the Italian in the supply of the Roman, or the Grecian in that of the Constantinopolitan markets, destroyed the fabric the legions had reared. Italy could not compete with Libya, or Greece with Poland. Rome was supplied by the former, Constantinople by the latter. If the Mediterranean wafted the legions out in the rise of the empire, *it wafted foreign grain in* in its later stages, and the last undid all that the former had done. The race of *agricultural freemen* in Italy, the bone and muscle of the legions which had conquered the world, became extinct; the rabble of towns were unfit for the labours, and averse to the dangers of war; mercenaries became the only resource.

The fact in modern times, which illustrates and confirms the same view of the chief cause of the ruin of the Roman empire is, that a similar effect has taken place, and is at this moment in full operation in Romelia, and all the environs of Constantinople. Every traveller in the East knows that desolation as complete as that of the Campagna of Rome pervades the whole environs of Constantinople; that the moment you emerge from the gates of that noble city you find yourself in a wilderness, and that the grass comes up to your horse's girths all the way to Adrianople. "Romelia," says Slade, "if cultivated, would become the granary of the East;" *whereas Constantinople depends on*

Odessa for daily bread. The burial-grounds, choked with weeds and underwood, constantly occurring in every traveller's route, far remote from habitations, are eloquent testimonials of continued depopulation. The living, too, are far apart; a town about every fifty miles, *a village every ten miles*, is deemed close; and horsemen meeting on the highway regard each other as objects of curiosity.* This is the Agro Romano over again. Nor will it do to say that it is the oppression of the Turkish government which occasions this desolation and destruction of the rural population, for many parts of Turkey are not only well cultivated but most densely peopled—as, for example, the broad tract of Mount Hæmus, where agriculture is in as admirable a state as in the mountains of Tuscany or Switzerland. “No peasantry in the world,” says Slade, “are so well off as those of Bulgaria; the lowest of them has abundance of everything—meat, poultry, eggs, milk, rice, cheese, wine, bread, good clothing, a warm dwelling, and a horse to ride; where is the tyranny under which the Christian subjects of the Porte are generally supposed to dwell? Not among the Bulgarians certainly. I wish that, in every country, a traveller could pass from one end to the other, and find a good supper and warm fire in every cottage, as he can in this part of European Turkey.”† Clarke gives the same account of the peasantry of Parnassus and Olympia; and it is true generally of almost all the *mountain* districts of Turkey. How, then, does it happen that the rich and level plains of Romelia, at the gates of Constantinople, and thence over a breadth of a hundred and twenty miles to Adrianople, are a desert? Slade has explained it in a word. “*Constantinople depends on Odessa for its daily bread.*” The cry for cheap bread in Constantinople, its noble harbour, and ready communication by water with Egypt on the one hand, and the Ukraine on the other, have done the whole. Romelia, like the Campagna of Rome, is a desert, because the market of Constantinople is lost to the Turkish cultivators; because grain can be brought cheaper from the Nile and the Wolga than raised at home, in consequence of the cheapness of labour in those remote provinces; and because the Turkish

* SLADE'S *Travels in the East*, ii. 15.

† SLADE, ii. 97.

government, dreading an insurrection in the capital, have done nothing to protect native industry.

There are many countries to whom the most unlimited freedom in the importation of corn can do no injury. There are, in the first place, the great grain countries, such as Poland and the Ukraine: they have no more reason to dread the importation of grain than Newcastle that of coals, or the Scotch Highlands that of moor game. In the next place, countries which *are poor* need never fear the importation of corn from abroad, for they have no money to pay for it; and if they had, it would not be brought in at a profit, because, currency being scarce, of course the price will be low. Lastly, countries which have vast inland tracts, like Russia, Austria, France, and America, especially if no extensive system of water communication exists in their interior, have little reason to apprehend injury from the most unrestricted commerce in grain; because the cost of inland carriage, on so bulky and heavy an article as corn, is so considerable that the produce of foreign harvests can never penetrate far into the interior, or come to supply a large portion of the population with food.

The countries which have reason to apprehend injury, and in the end destruction, to their native agriculture from the unrestricted admission of foreign corn, are those which, though they may possess a territory in many places well adapted for the raising of grain crops, are yet rich, far advanced in civilisation, with a narrow territory, and their principal towns on the sea-coast. They have everything to dread from foreign importation; because both the plenty of currency which opulence brings in its train, and the heavy public burdens with which it is invariably attended, render labour dear at home, by lowering the value of money and raising the weight of taxation. If long continued, an unrestricted foreign importation cannot fail to ruin agriculture and destroy domestic strength in such a state. Italy and Greece stood eminently in such a situation; for all their great towns were upon the sea-coast, their territory was narrow, and being successively the seats of empire, and the centres of long-continued opulence, money was more plentiful, and therefore production dearer, than in those remote and poorer states from which grain might be brought to

their great towns by sea-carriage. In the present circumstances of this country, we would do well to bear in mind the following reflections of Sismondi:—"It is not to no purpose that we have entered into the foregoing details concerning the state of agriculture in the neighbourhood of Rome; for we are persuaded that a universal tendency in Europe *menaces us with the same calamities*, even in those countries which at present seem to adopt an entirely opposite system; *only the Romans have gone through the career, while we are only entering upon it.*"*

The times are past, indeed, when gratuitous distributions of grain will be made to an idle population, as under the Roman emperors, or bread be sold for centuries by Government at a fixed and low price, as under their Papal successors. But the same causes which produced these effects are still in operation. The cry for cheap bread in a populous state, is as menacing as it was to the emperors or popes of Rome. The only difference is, the sacrifice of domestic industry is now more disguised. The thing is done; but it is done not openly, by public deliveries of the foreign grain at low prices, but indirectly under the specious guise of free trade. Government does not say, "We will import Polish grain, and sell it permanently at 36s. or 40s. a-quarter;" but it says, "We will open our harbours to the Polish farmers, who can do so. We will admit grain duty-free from a country where wages are sixpence a-day, and rents half-a-crown an acre." They thus force down the price of grain to the foreign level, augmented only by the cost and profit of importation, as effectually as ever did the emperors or the *Casa Annonaria* of Rome.

And what has Rome—the urban population of Rome, for whose supposed interests, and in obedience to whose menacing cry, the Roman market has for eighteen centuries been supplied with foreign bread—what have they gained by this long concession of Government to their wishes? Sismondi has told us in one word—"In Rome there is *no commerce between the town and the country.*" They would have foreign grain with its consequences, and *they have had foreign grain with its consequences.* And what have been these consequences? Why, that the Eternal City, which,

* SISMONDI'S *Essais*, ii. 71.

even when taken by the Goths, had 1,200,000 inhabitants within its walls, can now scarcely number 170,000, and these almost entirely in poverty, and mainly supported by the influx and expenditure of foreigners. The Campagna, once so fruitful and so peopled, has become a desert. No inhabitant of the Roman States buys anything in Rome. Their glory is departed; it has gone to other people and other lands. And what would have been the result, if this wretched concession to blind and unforeseeing popular clamour had not taken place? Why, that Rome would have been what Naples, where domestic industry is protected, has become; it would have numbered 400,000 busy and active citizens within its walls. The Campagna would have been what the Marches of Ancona now are. Between Rome and the Campagna, a million of happy and industrious human beings would have existed in the Agro Romano, independent of all the world, mutually nourishing and supporting each other—instead of 170,000 indolent and inactive citizens of a town, painfully dependent on foreign supplies for bread, and on foreign gold for the means of purchasing it.

Disastrous as have been the consequences of a free trade in grain to the Roman States, alike in ancient and modern times, it was introduced by its rulers in antiquity under the influence of noble and enlightened principles. The whole civilised world was then one state; the banks of the Nile and the plains of Libya acknowledged the sway of the emperors, as much as the shores of the Tiber or the fields of the Campagna. When the Roman Government, ruling so mighty a dominion, permitted the harvests of Africa and the Ukraine to supplant those of Italy and Greece, they did no more than justice to their varied subjects. Magnanimously overlooking local interests and desires, they extended their vision over the whole civilised world, and

“View’d with equal eyes, as lords of all,”

their subjects, whether in Italy, Spain, Egypt, or Libya. Though the seat of government was locally on the Tiber, they administered for the interest of the whole civilised world, alike far and near. If the Campagna was ruined, the Delta of Egypt flourished! If the plains of Umbria were desolate, those of Libya and Spain, equally parts of the

empire, were waving with grain. But can the same be said of England, now proclaiming a free trade in grain, not merely with her colonies or distant provinces, but with her rivals or her enemies? Not merely with Canada and Hindostan, but with Russia and America?—with countries jealous of her power, envious of her fame, covetous of her riches. What should we have said of the wisdom of the Romans, if they had sacrificed Italian to African agriculture in the days of Hannibal?—if they had put it in the power of the Carthaginian Senate to have said, “We will not arm our galleys; we will not levy armies; we will prohibit the importation of African grain, and starve you into submission?” How is England to maintain her independence, if the Autocrat of Russia and the President of America, by issuing their orders from St Petersburg and Washington, can at any moment stop the importation of ten millions of quarters of foreign grain—that is, a sixth of our whole annual consumption? And are we to render desolate our own fields, to render penniless our home customers, not in order to promote the interest of the distant parts of our empire, but in order to enrich and vivify our enemies?

It is said public opinion runs in favour of such a change; that the manufacturing has become the dominant interest in the state; that wages must, at all hazards, be beat down to the Continental level; and that, right or wrong, the thing must be done. But, be the present opinion of the majority what it may, that will not alter the nature of things: it will not render that wise which is unwise. Public opinion in Athens, in the time of Demosthenes, was nearly unanimous to apply the public funds to the support of the theatres instead of the army; and they got the battle of Chæronea, and subjugation by Philip, for their reward. Public opinion, in Europe, was unanimous in favour of the Crusades; and millions of brave men left their bones in Asia in consequence. The Senate of Carthage, yielding to the wishes of the majority of their democratic community, refused to send succours to Hannibal in Italy; and they brought, in consequence, the legions of Scipio Africanus round their walls. Public opinion, in France, was unanimous in favour of the expedition to Moscow: “They regarded it,” says Segur, “as a mere hunting-party of six months;” but that did not hinder it

from bringing the Cossacks to Paris. The old Romans were unanimous in their cry for cheap bread, and they brought the Gothic trumpet to their gates from its effects. A vast majority of the electors of Great Britain, in 1831, were in favour of Reform: out of 101, 98 county members were returned in the Liberal interest; and now they have got their reward, in seeing the Reformed Parliament preparing to abolish all protection to native industry. All the greatest and most destructive calamities recorded in history have been brought about, not only with the concurrence, but in obedience to the fierce demand, of the majority. Protection to domestic industry, at home or colonial, is the unseen but strongly-felt bond which unites together the far-distant provinces of the British empire by the firm bond of mutual interest. Withdraw the cement, remove the bond, and the mighty fabric will crumble into ruins.

FRANCE IN 1833

[BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, OCTOBER & DECEMBER 1833] *

OBSERVATIONS made on the spot by one who has long regarded the political changes of France with interest, may possibly be of service, in conveying to the public on the other side of the Channel some idea of the present state and future prospects of a nation, avowedly followed as the leader by the Liberal party all over the world in the great work of political regeneration. Such a sketch, drawn with no feeling of political or national animosity, but with every wish for the present and future happiness of the great people among whom it is composed, may possibly cool many visionary hopes, and extinguish some ardent anticipations ; but it will at least demonstrate what is the result, in the circumstances where it has been most triumphant, of democratic ascendancy ; and prepare the inhabitants of Great Britain and the Government for the fate which awaits them if they continue to follow the footsteps of the French Liberals in the career, one stage of which has been recently brought, on this side of the Channel, to so triumphant a conclusion.

Most of the educated inhabitants of Great Britain visited France during the Restoration ; many of them at different times. Every one thought he had acquired some idea of the political state and prospects of the country, and was enabled to form some anticipations as to its future destiny. We are now enabled to say, that most of these views were partial or erroneous. They were so, not so much from defect in the observation of France, as from ignorance of the political principles and passions which were at work amongst its inhabitants ; from want of experience of the result of demo-

* Written during a residence of some months in Paris in summer 1833.

cratic convulsions ; from judging of a country over which the wave of Revolution had passed, with the ideas drawn from one which had expelled its fury. We observed France accurately enough, but we did so with English eyes ; we supposed its inhabitants to be actuated by the feelings, interests, and motives which were then at work among ourselves, and could form no conception of the new set of principles and desires which are stirred up during the agitation of a revolution. In this respect our powers of observation are now materially improved. We have had some experience during the last three years of democratic convulsion ; we know the passions and desires which are developed by arraying the lower orders against the higher. We have acquired an acquaintance with the signs and marks of revolutionary terror. Standing thus on the confines of the two systems—at the extremity of English liberty, and the entrance of French democracy—we are now peculiarly qualified to form an accurate opinion of the tendency of these opposite principles of government ; we know the landmarks of the civilisation which is receding from the view, and have gained some acquaintance with the perils of that which is approaching ; and, combining recent with former experience in our own and the neighbouring country, can form a tolerably accurate idea of the fate which awaits them and ourselves.

The leading circumstance in the present condition of France which first strikes an English observer, and is the most important feature it exhibits in a political point of view, is the enormous and apparently irresistible power of the central government at Paris over all the rest of France. This must appear rather a singular result after forty years of ardent aspirations after freedom, but nevertheless nothing is more certain, and it constitutes the great and distinguishing result of the Revolution.

Such has been the centralisation of power by the various democratic assemblies who at different times have ruled the destinies of this great country, that there is hardly a vestige of power or influence now left to the provinces. All the situations of emolument of every description, from the highest to the lowest, in every department and line of life, are in the gift of Government. No man, in a situation

approaching to that of a gentleman, can rise either in the civil or military career in any part of France, unless he is promoted by the central offices at Paris. These are general expressions which convey no definite idea. A few examples will render the state of the country in this particular more intelligible.

The Chamber of Peers, who now hold their situations only for life, are appointed by the Crown.

The whole army, now four hundred thousand strong, is at the disposal of Government. All the officers in that great body of course receive their appointment from the War-office at Paris.

The navy, no inconsiderable force, is also appointed by the same power.

The whole artificers and officers connected with the engineers and artillery, a most numerous body in a country so beset with fortifications and fortresses as France, derive their appointments from the central Government.

The Custom-house officers, an immense body, whose huts and stations are set down at short distances all round France, are all nominated by the central office at Paris.

The Post-office, in every department throughout the kingdom, is exclusively filled by the servants of Government.

The Police, an immense force, having not less than eighty thousand employés in constant occupation, and which extends its iron net over the whole country, are all appointed by the Minister at the head of that department.

The Clergy over the whole country receive their salaries from Government, and are appointed by the Crown.

The whole teachers of youth of every description, in all public or established seminaries, whether parochial or departmental, are appointed by the Minister of Public Instruction.

The management of the roads, bridges, and chaussées, throughout all the kingdom, is intrusted to persons appointed by the Crown. No man can break a stone, or mend a bridge, or repair a pavement, from Calais to Bayonne, unless he is in the service of Government ; and all the labourers on the roads have a uniform hat, with the words "Cantonnier," or "Pontonnier," upon it, indicating that they are in the service of the state.

The Post-horses over all France are under the control of the Crown. Not only the post-masters, but every postilion from Brest to Marseilles, and Strasburg to Bordeaux, is nominated by the Government. No additional hand can be added in the remotest relay of horses without the authority of the Parisian Bureau. On all the great roads in the north of France there are too few postilions, and travellers are daily detained hours on the road, not because horses are wanting, but because it has not pleased the Ministers of the Interior to appoint a sufficient number of postilions for the different stations. In the south the case is the reverse ; the postilions are too numerous, and can hardly live, from the division of their business among so many hands ; but the mandate has gone forth from the Tuileries, and obedience must be the order of the day.

The whole diligences, stage-coaches, mails, and conveyances of every description which convey travellers by relays of horses in every part of France, must employ the post-horses and postilions appointed at the different stations by the Crown. No private individual or company can run a coach with relays with their own horses. They may establish as many coaches as they choose, but they must all be drawn by the royal horses and postilions, if they do not convey the travellers *en voiturier* with the same horses all the way. This great monopoly was established by a decree of the Directory, 9th Dec. 1798, which is in these terms : “ Nul autre que les maîtres de poste, munis d’une commission spéciale, ne pourra établir de relais particuliers, relayer ou conduire à titre de louage des voyageurs d’un relais à un autre, à peine d’être contraint de payer par forme d’indemnité le prix de la course, au profit des maîtres de poste et des postillons qui auront été frustrés.”

The whole firemen throughout France are organised in battalions, and wear a uniform like soldiers, and are appointed by Government.

The whole Judges, superior and inferior, over the whole kingdom, as well as the Prefets, Sous-Prefets, Procureurs du Roi, and in general all the legal offices of every description, are appointed by Government. The only exception are the Juges du Paix, a sort of arbiters and mediators in

each canton, to settle the trifling disputes of the peasants, whom they are permitted to name for themselves.

The whole officers employed in the collection of the revenue, over the whole country, are appointed by the Government. They are an extremely numerous body, and add immensely to the influence of the central authority, from whom all their appointments emanate.

It would be tedious to carry this enumeration farther. Suffice it to say, that the Government of France has now drawn to itself the whole patronage in every department of business and line of life over the whole country. The Army, the Navy, the Law, the Church, the Professors and teachers of every description; the Revenue, the Post-office, the roads, bridges, and canals, the post-horses, the postilions, the firemen, the police, the gens-d'armes, constitute so many different branches in which the whole patronage is vested in the central Government at Paris, and in which no step can be taken, or thing attempted, without the authority of the Minister for that department, or the deputy in the capital. In consequence of this prodigious concentration of power and patronage in the public offices of Paris, and the total stripping of every sort of influence from the Departments, the habit has become universal in every part of France, of looking to Paris, not only for the initiation in every measure and thought, but for the means of getting on in every line of life. Has a man a son to put into the army or navy, the law, the church, the police, or revenue? He finds that he has no chance of success unless he is taken by the hand by the Government. Is he anxious to make him a professor, a teacher, or a school-master? He is obliged to look to the same quarter for the means of advancement. Is his ambition limited to the humbler situation of a postmaster, a bridge contractor, a courier or a postilion? He must pay his court to the Prefet of the Department, in order to obtain a recommendation to the Minister of the Interior, or the Director of Bridges and Roads. Is he even reduced to earn his bread by breaking stones upon the highways, or paving the streets of the towns? He must receive the wages of Government, and must wear their livery for his twenty sous a-day. Thus, in every department and line of life

Government patronage is indispensable, and the only way in which success is to be obtained is by paying court to some person in authority.

In a commercial and manufacturing country, such as England, many and various means exist of rising to wealth and distinction, independent of Government; and in some opposition to it is the surer passport to eminence of the two. Under the old constitution of England, when political power was vested in the holders of great property, and the great body of the people watched their proceedings with distrust and jealousy, eminence was to be attained in any public profession, as the Bar or the Senate, chiefly by acquiring the suffrages of the greater number of the citizens; and hence the popular independent line was the one which in general led soonest to fame and eminence. Commerce and manufactures opened up a thousand channels of lucrative industry, independent altogether of Government support; and many of the most important branches of patronage, great part of the Church, and the majority of all establishments for education, were in the hands of corporations or private individuals, often in opposition to, or unconnected with, Ministerial influence. But the reverse of all this obtains in France. There little commerce or manufactures are, comparatively speaking, to be found. With the exception of Paris, Lyons, Bordeaux, Rouen, and Marseilles, no commercial cities exist; and the innumerable channels for private adventure which the colonial possessions and immense trade of Britain open up are unknown. All the private establishments or corporations vested with patronage in any line, as the Church, education, charity, or the like, were destroyed during the Revolution of 1793, and nothing was left but the great and overwhelming power of Government, standing the more prominently forward, from the extinction of every rival authority which might compete with its influence.

From the same cause has arisen a degree of slavish submission, in all the provinces of France, to the will or caprice of the Metropolis, which is almost incredible, and says but little for the independence of thought and character which has grown up in that country since the schoolmaster has been abroad. From the habit of looking to Paris for

directions in everything, from the making of a King to the repairing of a bridge, they have absolutely lost the power of judging for themselves, or taking the initiative in anything either of the greatest or the smallest moment. This appears, in the most striking manner, in all the political changes which have taken place in the country for the last forty years. Ever since the bones of old France were broken by the Constituent Assembly; since the Parliaments, the Provinces, the Church, the Incorporations, were swept away by its gigantic acts of democratic despotism, the departments have sunk into absolute insignificance, and everything has been determined by the will of the capital, and the acts of the Central Government at its head. When the Girondists, the illustrious representatives of the country districts, were proscribed, the most violent feelings of indignation spread through the South and West of France. Sixty-five, out of the eighty-four departments, rose in insurrection against the despotism of the capital; but the unwonted exertion surpassed their strength, and they soon yielded, without a struggle worth the notice of history, to its usurped authority. When Robespierre executed Danton and his adherents; when he himself sank under the stroke of the Thermidorians; when Napoleon overthrew the National Guard of Paris in October 1795; when the Directory were expelled by the bayonets of Augereau, on the 18th Fructidor 1797; when Napoleon seized the reins of power in November 1799; when he declared himself Emperor, and overturned all the principles of the Revolution in 1804; when he was vanquished by the Allies in 1814; when he resumed the helm in 1815; when he was finally dethroned after the battle of Waterloo; when the revolt of the Barricades, in July 1830, established a revolutionary Government in the capital; when the suppression of the insurrection at the cloister of St Merri defeated a similar attempt two years afterwards, the obedient departments were equally ready with their addresses of congratulation. On every one of these various, contradictory, and inconsistent changes, France submitted at once to the dictatorial power of Paris; and thirty millions of men willingly took the law from the caprices or passions of a few hundred thousands. The subjection of Rome to

the Prætorian Guards, or of Turkey to the Janizaries, was never more complete.

It was not thus in old France. The greatest and most glorious efforts of her people, in favour of freedom, were made when the capital was in the hands of foreign or domestic enemies. The English more than once wrested Paris from their grasp; but the forces of the south rallied behind the Loire, and at length expelled the cruel invaders from their shores. The forces of the League were long in possession of the capital; but Henry IV., at the head of the Militia of the Provinces, at length conquered its citizens, and Paris received a master from the foot of the Pyrenees. The Révolution of 1789 commenced with the provinces: it was their Parliaments which, under Louis XV. and XVI., spread the spirit of resistance to arbitrary power through the country; and it was from their exertions that the unanimous spirit, which compelled the Court to convoke the States-general, arose. Now, all is changed: not a murmur, not a complaint against the acts of the capital, is to be heard from Calais to Bayonne; but the obedient departments are equally ready at the arrival of the mail, or the receipt of the telegraph, to hail with shouts a Republic or an Empire—a Dictator or a Consul—a Robespierre or a Napoleon—a Monarch, the heir of fourteen centuries—or a Hero, the child of a hundred victories.

All the great and useful undertakings, which in England, and all free countries, emanate from the capital or skill of individuals or associated bodies, in France spring from the Government, and the Government alone. Their universities, schools, and colleges; academies of primary and secondary instruction; military and polytechnic schools; hospitals, charitable institutions, libraries, museums, and public establishments of all sorts; their harbours, bridges, roads, canals—everything, in short, originates with, and is directed by, the Government. Hence, individuals in France seldom attempt anything for the public good: private advantage or amusement, the rise of fortune or the increase of power, constitute the general motives of action. Like the passengers in a ship, or the soldiers in an army, the French surrender themselves, without a struggle, to the

guidance of those in possession of the helm ; or if they rise in rebellion against them, it is not so much from any view to the public good, as from a desire to secure to themselves the advantages which the possession of political power confers.

This extraordinary concentration of everything in the Central Government at Paris, always existed to a certain extent in France ; but it has been increased to a most extraordinary degree under the democratic rule of the last forty years. It was the Constituent Assembly, borne forward on the gales of revolutionary fervour, which made the greatest additions to the power of Government—not merely by the concentration of patronage and direction of every kind in Ministers, but by the destruction of the Aristocracy, the Church, the Incorporations ;—everything, in short, which could withstand or counterbalance the influence of Government. The people, charmed with the installation of their representatives in supreme power, readily acquiesced in, or rather strenuously supported, all the additions made by the democratic Legislature to the powers of the Executive ; fondly imagining that, by so doing, they were laying the surest foundation for the continuance of their own power. They little foresaw, what the event soon demonstrated, that they were incapable, in the long run, of preserving this power ; that it would speedily fall into the hands of ambitious or designing men, who flattered their passions, in order to secure the possession of arbitrary authority for themselves ; and that, in the end, the absolute despotism, which they had created for the purpose of perpetuating the rule of the multitude, would terminate in imposing on them the most abject servitude. When Napoleon came to the throne, he found it unnecessary to make any great changes in the practical working of Government ; he found a despotism ready made to his hand, and had only to seize the reins, so tightly bitted on the nation by his revolutionary predecessors.

The Revolution of July made no difference in this respect ; or rather it tended to concentrate still farther in the metropolis the authority and power of Government. The able and indefatigable leaders who during the fifteen years of the Restoration had laboured incessantly to subvert the autho-

city of the Royalists, had no sooner succeeded than they quietly took possession of all the powers which they enjoyed, and, supported with more talent, and a greater display of armed force, exercised them with far greater severity. No concessions to real freedom were made—no division of the powers of the Executive took place. All appointments in every line still flow from Paris: not a postilion can ride a post-horse, not a peasant break a stone on the highways, from the Channel to the Pyrenees, unless authorised by the central authority. The Legislature convoked by Louis Philippe has done much to abridge the authority of others, but nothing to diminish that which is most to be dreaded, the authority of the Executive. They have destroyed the hereditary legislature, the last remnant of European civilisation which the convulsions of their predecessors had left, but done nothing to weaken the authority of the Executive. Louis Philippe enjoys, during the precarious tenure of his crown, at the will of the Prætorian Guards of Paris, more absolute authority than ever was held by the most despotic of the Bourbon race.

France being held in absolute subjection by Paris, all that is necessary to preserve this authority is to secure the mastery of the capital. Marshal Soult has taught the Citizen King how this is to be done. He keeps an immense military force, from 35,000 to 40,000 men, constantly in the capital; and an equal force is stationed within twelve miles round, ready to march at a signal from the telegraph on Montmartre, in a few hours, to crush any attempt at insurrection. In addition to this, there are 50,000 National Guards in Paris, and 25,000 more in the Banlieue, or rural district round its walls, admirably equipped, well drilled, and, to appearance at least, quite equal to the regular soldiers. Of this great force, above 5000, half regulars and half National Guards, are every night on duty as sentinels, or patrols, in the capital. There is not a street where several sentinels, on foot or horseback, are not stationed, and each within call of a picquet or patrol, ready to render aid, if required, at a minute's notice. Paris, in a period of profound peace, without an enemy approaching the Rhine, resembles rather a city in hourly expectation of an assault from a beleaguering enemy than the capital of a peaceful monarchy.

In addition to this prodigious display of military force, the Civil Employés, the Police, constitute a body nearly as formidable, and, to individuals at least, much more dangerous. Not only are the streets constantly traversed by this force in their appropriate dress, but more than half their number are always prowling about, disguised as workmen or tradesmen, to pick up information, mark individuals, and arrest discontented characters. They enter coffeehouses, mingle in groups, overhear conversations, join in discussions, and, if they discover anything seditious or dangerous, they either arrest the delinquent at once, and hand him over to the nearest guard, or denounce him to their superiors, and he is arrested at night by an armed force in his bed. Once incarcerated, his career, for a long time at least, is terminated : he is allowed to lie there till his projects evaporate, or his associates are dispersed, without either being discharged or brought to trial. There is not a night at this time (July 1833) that from fifteen to twenty persons are not arrested in this way by the police ; and nothing is heard of their subsequent trial.

From the long continuance of these arrests by the police, the prisons of Paris, spacious as they are, and ample as they were found during the Reign of Terror, have become unable to contain their numerous inmates. Fresh and extraordinary places of confinement have become necessary. A new jail, of great dimensions, guarded by an ample military force, has been constructed by the Citizen King near the cemetery of Père la Chaise, where the overflowings of the other prisons in Paris are safely lodged. The more dangerous characters are conveyed to fortresses in the interior, or the Chateau of Mount St Michael, in Normandy. This great state-prison, capable of holding many hundred prisoners, is situated in the sea, on the coast of the Channel, and amply tenanted now by the most unruly part of the population of Paris, under a powerful military and naval garrison.

Above fifteen hundred persons were arrested after the great revolt at the Cloister of St Merri, in June 1832 ; and, though a few have been brought to trial or discharged, the great majority still remain in prison, in the charge of the police, under warrants apparently of interminable duration. The nightly arrests and numerous domiciliary visits are

constantly adding to this immense number, and gradually thinning that ardent body who effected the Revolution of July, and have proved so formidable to every Government of France, since the beginning of the revolutionary troubles in 1789. The fragment of this body, who fought at the Cloister of St Merri, evinced such heroic courage and invincible determination, that the Government have resolved on a *bellum ad internecionem* with such formidable antagonists; and, by the continued application of arrests and domiciliary visits, have now considerably weakened their numbers, as well as damped their hopes. Still it is against this democratic Rump that all the vigilance of the police is exerted. The Royalists are neglected or despised; but the Republicans, whom it is not so easy to daunt, are sought out with undecaying vigilance, and treated with uncommon severity.

Public meetings, or any of the other constitutional modes of giving vent to general opinion in Great Britain, are unknown in France. If twenty or thirty thousand men were collected together in that way, they would infallibly be assailed by the military force, and their dispersion, or the overthrow of the Government, would be the consequence.

The only relic of freedom, which has survived the Revolution of July, is the liberty of the Press. It is impossible to read the journals which are in every coffee-house every morning, without seeing that all the efforts of despotism have failed in coercing this mighty instrument. The measures of public men are canvassed with unsparing severity; and not only liberal, but revolutionary measures are advocated with great earnestness, and no small share of ability. It is not, however, without the utmost efforts on the part of Government to suppress it that this licentiousness exists. Prosecutions against the press have been instituted with a degree of rigour and frequency, since the Revolution of July, unknown under the lenient and feeble government of the Restoration. The *Tribune*, which is the leading republican journal, has reached its *eighty-second* prosecution since the Three Glorious Days. More prosecutions have been instituted since the accession of the Citizen King, than during the whole fifteen that the elder branch of the Bourbons was on the throne. The Government, however, have not

ventured on the decisive step of suppressing the seditious journals, or establishing a Censorship of the Press. The recollection of the Three Days, which commenced with the attempts to shut up the printing-offices of some newspapers, prevents this last act of despotism. The National Guard, in all probability, would resist such an attempt; and, if not supported by them, it would endanger the crown of Louis Philippe. Government has apparently discovered that the retention of the power of abuse consoles the Parisians for the loss of all their other liberties. They read the newspapers and see the Ministry violently assailed, and imagine they are in full possession of freedom, though they cannot travel ten leagues from Paris without a passport, nor go to bed in the evening with any security that they will not be arrested during the night by the police, and consigned to prison, without any possibility of redress, for an indefinite period.

The present Government appears to be *universally* disliked in France. You may travel over the whole country without discovering one trace of attachment to the reigning family. Their names are hardly ever mentioned; by common consent they appear to be consigned to oblivion by *all* classes. A large and ardent part of the people are attached to the memory of Napoleon, and seize every opportunity of testifying their admiration of that illustrious man. Another large and formidable body have openly espoused the principles of democracy, and are indefatigable in their endeavours to establish their favourite dream of a republic. The Royalists, few in number in Paris and the great commercial towns, abound in the South and West, and openly proclaim their determination, if Paris will take the lead, to restore the lawful race of sovereigns. But Louis Philippe has no partisans, save the numerous civil and military employés who wear his livery or eat his bread. Not a vestige of attachment to the Orleans dynasty is to be seen in France. His presence in Paris is known only by the appearance of a mounted patrol on each side of the arch in the Place Carrousel, who are stationed there only when the King is at the Tuileries. He enters the capital, and leaves it, without any one inquiring or knowing anything about him. If he is seen in the street, not a head is uncovered, not a cry

of *Vive le Roi* is heard. Nowhere is a print or bust of any of the Royal Family to be seen. Not a scrap of printing narrating any of their proceedings beyond the Government journals is to be met with. You may travel across the kingdom, or, what is of more consequence, traverse Paris in every direction, without being made aware, by any thing you see or hear, that a King exists in France. The Royalists detest him because he has established a revolutionary throne ; the Republicans, because he has belied all his professions in favour of freedom, and reared a military despotism on the foundation of the Barricades.

The French, in consequence of these circumstances, are in a very peculiar state. They are discontented with *everything* ; and what is worse, they know not to what quarter to look for relief. They are tired of the Citizen King, whom they accuse of saving money, and preparing for America ; of having given them the weight of a despotism without its security, and the exhaustion of military preparation without either its glory or its advantages. They (excluding the Royalists) abhor the Bourbons, whom they regard as priest-ridden, superstitious, weak, and feeble ; men unfit to govern the first nation in the world. They dread a Republic as likely to strip them of their sons and their fortunes ; to induce an interminable war with the European Powers ; deprive them of their incomes, and possibly endanger the national independence. They are discontented with the present, fearful of the future, and find their only consolation in reverting to the days of Napoleon and the Grand Army, as a brilliant drama now lost for ever. They are in the situation of the victim of passion, or the slave of pleasure, who, worn out with enjoyment, *blasé* with satiety, has no longer any enjoyment in life, but incessantly reverts with the prurient restlessness of premature age to the orgies and the excesses of his youth.

What then, it may be asked, upholds the reigning dynasty, if it is hated equally by both the great parties who divide France, and can number none but its own official dependants among its supporters ? The answer is to be found in the immense extent of the pecuniary losses which the Revolution of July occasioned to all men of any property in the country, and the recollection of the Reign of Terror, which

is still vividly present to the minds of the existing generation.

On the English side of the Channel, few are aware of the enormous pecuniary losses with which the triumph of democracy in July 1830 was attended. In Paris, all parties are agreed that the depreciation of property of every description in consequence of that event was about a *third*; in other words, every man found himself a third poorer after the overthrow of Charles X. than he was before it. Over the remainder of France the losses sustained were nearly as great, in some places still heavier. For the two years which succeeded the Barricades, trade and commerce of every description were at a stand; the import of goods declined a fourth, and one half of the shopkeepers in Paris and all the great towns became bankrupt. The distress among the labouring classes, and especially those who depended on the sale of articles of manufactured industry or luxury, was unprecedented. It is the recollection of this long period of national agony which upholds the throne of Louis Philippe. The National Guard of Paris, who are in truth the ruling power in France, know by bitter experience to what a revolution, even of the most bloodless kind, leads—decay of business, decline of credit, stoppage of sales, pressure of creditors. They recollect the innumerable bankruptcies of 1830 and 1831, and are resolved that their names shall not enter the list. They know that the next convulsion would establish a republic in unbridled sovereignty: they know the principles of these apostles of democracy; they recollect their actions; the Reign of Terror, the massacres in the prisons, float before their eyes. They have a vivid impression also of the external consequences of such an event: they know that their hot-headed youth would instantly press forward to regain the frontier of the Rhine; they foresee a European war, a cessation of the influx of foreign wealth into Paris, and possibly a third visit by the Cossacks to the Champs Elysées. These are the considerations which maintain the allegiance of the National Guard, and uphold the throne of Louis Philippe, when there is not one spark of real attachment to him in the whole kingdom. He is supported, not because his character is loved, his achievements admired, or his principles vene-

rated, but because he is the last barrier between France and revolutionary suffering, and because the people have drunk too deep of that draught to tolerate a repetition of its bitterness.

Although, therefore, there is a large and energetic and most formidable party in France, who are ardently devoted to revolutionary principles, and long for a republic, as the commencement of every imaginable felicity ; yet the body in whom power is at present really vested, is essentially conservative. The National Guard of Paris, composed of the most reputable of the citizens of that great metropolis, equipped at their own expense, and receiving no pay from Government, consists of the very persons who have suffered most severely by the late convulsions. They form the ruling power in France ; for to them, more than the garrison of the capital, the Government look for that support which is so necessary amidst the furious factions by whom they are assailed ; and to their opinions the people attach a degree of weight which does not belong to any other body in France. The Chamber of Peers is disregarded, the Legislative Body despised ; but the National Guard is the object of universal respect, because every one feels that it possesses the power of making and unmaking kings. The Crown does not hesitate to act in opposition to a vote of both Chambers ; but the disapprobation of a majority of the National Guard is sure to command attention. In vain the Chamber of Deputies refused a vote of supplies for the erection of detached forts round Paris ; the ground was nevertheless purchased, and the sappers and miners, armed to the teeth, were busily employed from four in the morning till twelve at night, in their construction ; but when several battalions of the National Guard, in defiling before the King, on the anniversary of the Three Days, exclaimed, “ *A bas les forts détachés,*” the works were suspended, and are now going on only at Vincennes, and two other points. That which was refused to the collected wisdom of the Representatives of France is conceded at once to the cries of armed men : the ultimate decision is made by the bayonet ; and the boasted improvements of modern civilisation terminate in the same appeal to physical strength which characterised the days of Clovis.

This contempt into which the Legislature has fallen, is one of the great features of France, since the Revolution of July ; but it is one which is least known or understood on the English side of the Channel. The causes which produced it had been long in operation, but it was that event which brought them fully and prominently into view. The supreme power has now passed into other hands. It was neither the Peers nor the Commons, but the Populace in the streets, the heroes of the barricades, who seated Louis Philippe on the throne. The same force, it is acknowledged, possesses the power to dethrone him ; and hence the National Guard of the capital, as the organised concentration of this power, is looked to with respect. The departments, it is known, will hail with shouts whatever king, or whatever form of government the armed force in the capital choose to impose ; the Deputies, it is felt, will hasten to make their submission to the leaders who have got possession of the Treasury, the Bank, the Telegraph, and the War-Office. Hence, the strife of faction is no longer carried on by debates in the Chambers, or efforts in the Legislature. The National Guard of Paris is the body to which all attention is directed ; and if the departments are considered, it is not in order to influence their representatives, but to procure addresses or petitions from members of their National Guards, to forward the views of the great parties at work in the metropolis. Such petitions or addresses are daily to be seen in the public papers, and are referred to with undisguised satisfaction by the parties whose views they support. No regard is paid but to the men who have bayonets in their hands. Everything, directly or indirectly, is referred to physical strength, and the dreams of modern equality are fast degenerating into the lasting empire of the sword.

The complete insignificance of the Chambers, however, is to be referred to other and more general causes than the successful revolt of the barricades. That event only tore aside the veil which concealed the weakness of the Legislature ; and openly proclaimed what political wisdom had long feared, that the elements of an authoritative and paramount Legislature do not exist in France. When the National Assembly destroyed the nobility, the landed pro-

prietors, the clergy, and the incorporations of the country, they rendered a respectable Legislature impossible. It is in vain to attempt to give authority or weight to ordinary individuals not gifted with peculiar talents, by merely electing them members of Parliament. If they do not, from their birth, descent, fortune, or estates, already possess it, their mere translation in the Legislature will never have this effect. The House of Commons under the old English Constitution was so powerful, because it contained the representatives of all the great and lasting interests of the country, of its nobles, its landed proprietors, its merchants, manufacturers, burghers, tradesmen, and peasants. It commanded universal respect, because every man felt that his own interests were wound up with, and defended by a portion of that body. But this is not and cannot be the case in France : the classes are destroyed from whom the representatives of such varied interests must be chosen ; the interests in the nation do not exist whose intermixture is essential to a weighty legislature. Elected by persons possessed of one *uniform* qualification—the payment of direct taxes to the amount of two hundred francs, or eight pounds sterling a-year—the deputies are the representatives only of *one class in society*, the small proprietors. The other interests in the state, either do not exist or are not represented. The persons who are chosen are seldom remarkable either for their fortune, family, talent, or character. They are, to use a homely expression, “neighbour like ;” individuals of a bustling character or ambitious views, who have taken to politics as the best and most lucrative profession they could choose, as opening the door most easily to the innumerable civil and military offices which are the object of universal ambition in France. Hence they are not looked up to with respect even by their own department, who can never get over the homeliness of their origin or moderation of their fortune, and by the rest of France are unknown or despised.

The chief complaint against the Legislature in France is, that it is swayed by corruption and interested motives. That complaint has greatly increased since the lowering of the freehold qualification from three hundred to two hundred francs of direct taxes, in consequence of the Revolution

of July. This change has opened the door to a lower and more corruptible class of men ; numbers of whom got into the Legislature by making the most vehement professions of Liberal opinions to their constituents, which they instantly forgot when the seductions of office and emolument were displayed before their eyes. The majority of the Chamber, it is alleged, are gained by corruption ; and the more the qualification is lowered, the worse has this evil become. This is founded on the principles of human nature, and is of universal application. The more that you descend in society, the more will you find men accessible to corruption and selfish considerations, because bribes are of greater value to those who possess little or nothing than to those who possess a great deal. Many of the higher ranks are corrupt, but the power of resisting seduction exists to a greater degree among them than their inferiors. You generally run the risk of insult if you offer a man or woman of elevated station a bribe, but seldom if it is insinuated into the hand of their valet or lady's maid ; and when the ermine of the Bench is unspotted, so much can frequently not be said of the clerks or servants of those elevated functionaries. Where the Legislature is elected by persons of that inferior description, the influence of corruption will always be found to increase. It is for the people of England to judge whether the Reformed Parliament is or is not destined to afford another illustration of the rule.

To whatever cause it may be owing, the fact is certain, and cannot be denied by any person practically acquainted with France, that the Chamber of Deputies has fallen into the most complete contempt. Their debates have almost disappeared : they are hardly reported by the public press : seldom is any opposition to be seen amongst them. When Louis Philippe's crown was in jeopardy in June 1832, it was to the National Guard, and not to either branch of the Legislature, that all parties looked with anxiety. A unanimous vote of the old English Parliament would probably have had great weight with an English body of insurgents, as it certainly disarmed the formidable mutineers at the Nore ; but a unanimous vote of both Chambers at Paris would have had little or no effect. A hearty cheer from three battalions of National Guards would have been worth

a hundred votes of the Chambers ; and an insurrection, which all the moral force of Parliament could not subdue, fell before the vigour of two regiments of National Guards from the Banlieue.

It is owing apparently to this prodigious ascendancy of the National Guard of Paris that the freedom of discussion in the public journals has survived all the other liberties of France. These journals are, in truth, the pleaders before the Supreme Tribunals, the juntas of the National Guard, which govern the country, and they are flattered by the fearlessness of the language which is employed before them. They are as tenacious of the liberty of the press at Paris in consequence, as the Prætorian Guards or Janizaries were of their peculiar and ruinous privileges. The cries of the National Guard, the ruling power in France, are produced by the incessant efforts of the journals on the different sides, who have been labouring for months or years to sway their opinions. Thus the ultimate appeal in that country is to the editors of newspapers and the holders of bayonets, perhaps the classes of all others who are most unfit to be intrusted with the guidance of public affairs ; and certainly those the least qualified, in the end, to maintain their independence against the seductions or offers of a powerful Executive.

The Central Government at Paris is omnipotent in France ; but it does by no means follow from that that this Central Government is itself placed on a stable foundation. The authority of the Seraglio is paramount over Turkey ; but within its precincts the most dreadful contests are of perpetual recurrence. The National Assembly, by concentrating all the powers of Government in the capital, necessarily delivered over its inhabitants to an interminable future discord and strife. When once it is discovered that the mainspring of all authority and influence is to be found in the Government officers of Paris, the efforts of the different parties who divide the State are incessant to make themselves masters of the talisman. This is to be done, not by any efforts in the departments, not by any speeches in the Legislature, or any measures for the public good, but by incessant working at the armed force of the capital. By labouring in the public journals, in pamphlets, books, reviews,

and magazines, for a certain number of years, the faction in opposition at length succeed in making an impression on the holders of bayonets in Paris, or on the ardent and penniless youth who frequent its coffee-houses ; and when once this is done, by a well-organised *emeute* the whole is concluded. The people are roused, the National Guard hesitate, or join the insurgents ; the troops of the line refuse to act against their fellow-citizens ; the reigning dynasty is dethroned ; a new flag is hoisted at the Tuileries ; and the submissive departments hasten to declare their allegiance to the reigning power now in possession of the Treasury and the Telegraph, and disposing of 400,000 civil and military offices throughout France.

No sooner is this great consummation effected, than the fruits of the victory begin to be enjoyed by the successful party. Offices, honours, posts, and pensions, are showered down on the leaders, the officers and pioneers in the great work of national regeneration. The editors of the journals whose side has proved victorious instantly become Ministers : all their relations and connexions, far beyond any known or computable degree of consanguinity, are seated in lucrative or important offices. Regiments of cavalry, *préfetships*, *sous-préfetships*, *procureurships*, offices in the customs, excise, police, roads, bridges, church, universities, schools, or colleges, descend upon them thick as autumnal leaves in Vallombrosa. Meanwhile the vanquished party are universally and rigidly excluded from office ; their whole relations and connexions in every part of France find themselves suddenly reduced to a state of destitution ; and their only resource is to begin to work upon the opinions of the armed force or restless population of the capital, in the hope that, after the lapse of a certain number of years, another Revolution may be effected, and the golden shower descend upon themselves.

In the Revolution of July, prepared as it had been by the efforts of the Liberal press for fifteen years in France, and organised as it was by the wealth of Lafitte, and a few of the great bankers in Paris, this system was successful. And accordingly, Thiers, Guizot, the Duke de Broglie, and the whole coterie of the *Doctrinaires*, have risen at once, from being editors of newspapers or lecturers to students, to

the station of Ministers of State, and dispensers of several hundred thousand offices. They are now, in consequence, the object of universal obloquy and hatred with the remainder of the Liberal party, who accuse them of having sacrificed all their former opinions, and embraced all the arbitrary tenets of the Royalist faction, whom they were instrumental in subverting. Their conduct since they came into office, and especially since the accession of Casimir Perier's administration on the 13th March 1831, has been firm and moderate, strongly inclined to conservative principles, and, in consequence, odious to the last degree to the anarchical faction by whose aid they rose to greatness.

The great effort of this excluded faction was made on the 5th and 6th June 1832, on occasion of the funeral of Lamarque. In England it is not generally known how formidable that insurrection was, and how nearly it had subverted the newly erected throne of the Barricades. Above 80,000 persons, including a considerable portion of the National Guard from the Faubourg St Antoine, and other manufacturing districts of Paris, walked in regular military array, keeping the step in that procession: no one could see them without being astonished how the Government survived the crisis. In truth, their existence hung by a thread; for several hours a feather would have cast the balance—established a Republican Government, and plunged Europe in an interminable war. Till six o'clock in the evening the insurgents were continually advancing; and, at that hour, they had made themselves masters of about one-half of Paris, including the whole district to the eastward of a line drawn from the Port St Martin through the Hotel de Ville to the Pantheon. At the first alarm, the Government surrounded the Faubourg St Antoine with troops, and would have perished but for the fortunate cutting off of that great revolutionary quarter from the scene of active preparations. Though deprived of the expected co-operation in that district, however, the insurgents bravely maintained the combat: they intrenched themselves in the neighbourhood of the cloister of St Merri, and, among the narrow streets of that densely peopled quarter, maintained a doubtful struggle. The Ministers, in alarm, sent for the King, with intelligence that his crown was at stake: above 60,000 men,

with an immense train of artillery, were brought to the spot ; but still the issue seemed suspended. The National Guard of the city, for the most part, hung back ; the cries of others were openly in favour of the insurgents ; if a single battalion, either of the line or the National Guard, at that crisis had openly joined the rebels, all was lost. In this extremity a singular circumstance changed the fortune of the day, and fixed his tottering crown on the head of Louis Philippe. The little farmers round Paris, who live by sending their milk and vegetables to the capital, found their business suspended by the contest, which was raging in the centre of the city, where the markets for their produce are held ; their stalls and paniers were seized by the rebels, and run up into barricades. Enraged at this invasion of their property and stoppage of their business, these little dealers joined their respective banners, and hastened with the National Guard of the Banlieue to the scene of action : they were plentifully supplied with wine and spirits on the outside of the barrier ; and before the excitation had subsided, were hurried over the barricades, and determined the conflict. In its last extremity the crown of Louis Philippe was saved, neither by his boasted guards, nor by the civic force of the metropolis, but by the anger of a body of hucksters, gardeners, and milk-dealers, roused by the suspension of their humble occupations.

It is this peculiarity in the situation of the French Government which renders it necessary to watch the state of parties in Paris with such intense anxiety, and renders the strife in its streets the signal for peace or war all over the civilised world. The Government of France, despotic as it is over the remainder of the country, is entirely at the mercy of the metropolis. Having no root in the provinces, being based on no great interests in the State, it depends entirely on the armed force of the capital ; a well-organised *emeute*, the defection of a single regiment of guards, a few seditious cries from the National Guard, the sight of a favourite banner, a fortunate allusion to heart-stirring recollections, may at any moment consign it to destruction. If the insurgents of the city of Paris can make themselves masters of the Hotel de Ville, France is more than half conquered ; if their forces are advanced to the Marche des

Innocens, the throne is in greater danger than if the Rhine had been crossed by two hundred thousand men ; but if their flag is hoisted on the Tuileries, the day is won, and France, with its eighty-four departments and thirty-two millions of inhabitants, is at the disposal of the victorious faction. If the rebels who sold their lives so dearly in the cloister of St Merri could have openly gained over to their side one regiment, and many only waited an example to join their colours, they would speedily have been in possession of the Treasury and the Telegraph, and France was at their feet. No man knew this peculiarity in the political situation of the great nation better than Napoleon. He was little disquieted by the failure of the Russian campaign, till intelligence of the conspiracy of Malet reached his ears ; and that firmness which the loss of four hundred thousand men could not shake, was overturned by the news that the rebels in Paris had imprisoned the Minister of Police, and were within a hair's breadth of making themselves masters of the Telegraph.

It is not surprising that Paris should have acquired this unbridled sovereignty over the rest of the country, if the condition in which the provinces have been left by the Revolution is considered. You travel through one of the departments—not a gentleman's house or a chateau is to be seen. As far as the eye can reach, the country is covered with sheets of grain, or slopes covered with vines or vegetables, raised by the peasants who inhabit the villages, situated at the distance of a few miles from each other. Does this immense expanse belong to noblemen, gentlemen, or opulent proprietors capable of taking the lead in any common measures for the defence of the public liberties ? On the contrary, it is partitioned out among an immense body of little proprietors, the great majority of whom are in a state of extreme poverty, and who are chained to the plough by the most imperious of all laws—that of absolute necessity. Morning, noon, and night they are to be seen labouring in the fields, or returning weary and spent to their humble homes. Is it possible from such a class to expect any combined effort in favour of the emancipation of the provinces from the despotism of the capital ? The thing is utterly impossible : as well might you look for

an organised struggle for freedom among the Serfs of Russia or the Ryots of Hindostan.

A certain intermixture of peasant proprietors is essential to the wellbeing of society ; and the want of such a class to a larger extent in England, is one of the circumstances most to be lamented in its social condition. But there is a medium in all things. As much as the total want of little landowners is a serious evil, so much is the total want of any other class to be deprecated. In the time of the Duke de Gaeta, (1816,) that able statesman calculated that there were *four millions* of landed proprietors in France, and fourteen millions of souls constituting their families, independent of the wages of labour.* At present the number is computed at twenty-five millions. Generally speaking, they occupy the whole land in the country. Here and there an old chateau, still held by a remnant of the old noblesse, is to be seen ; or a modern villa, inhabited in summer by an opulent banker from one of the great manufacturing towns. But their number is too inconsiderable—they are too far separated from each other—to have any weight in the political scale. France is, in fact, a country of peasants, interspersed with a few great manufacturing towns, and ruled by a luxurious and corrupted capital.

Even the great manufacturing towns are incapable of forming any counterpoise to the power of the capital. They are situated too far from each other—they depend too completely on orders from Paris—to be capable of opposing any resistance to its authority. If Rouen, Marseilles, Lyons, or Bordeaux were to attempt the struggle, the Central Government would quickly crush each singly, before it could be aided by the other confederates. They tried to resist, under the most favourable circumstances, in 1793, when the Convention were assailed by all the Powers of Europe, when two-thirds of France joined their league, and the West was torn by the Vendean war, and totally failed. Any repetition of the attempt is out of the question.

The Representative System, the boast of modern civilisation, has been found by experience to be incapable of affording any remedy for this universal prostration of the

* DUC DE GAETA, ii. 334.

Provinces. That system is admirably adapted for a country which contains a gradation of classes in society from the prince to the peasant ; but it must always fail where the intermediate classes are destroyed, and there exist only the Government and the peasantry. Where this is the case, the latter body will always be found incapable of resisting the influence of the central authority. Who, in every age, from the signing of Magna Charta, have taken the lead in the support of English freedom ? The Barons and great landed proprietors, who possessed at once the resolution, influence, and power of combination, which are indispensable to such an attempt. Even the Reform Bill, the last and greatest triumph of democratic ambition, was forced through the legislature by the aid of a large and opulent portion of the aristocracy. If the Revolution of 1642 or 1688 had destroyed this intermediate body in the State, the Representative System would speedily have fallen into contempt. The humble, needy representatives of humble and needy constituents would in the end have found themselves overshadowed by the splendour of the Court, the power of the metropolis, or the force of the army. In periods of agitation, when the public mind is in a ferment, and the chief powers of the State pulled in one direction, they would have been irresistible ; but in times of tranquillity, when the voice of passion was silent, and that of interest constantly heard, they would have certainly given way. What is required in the representatives of the people, is a permanent resistance at *all times* to the various dangers which threaten the public freedom ; in periods of democratic agitation a firm resistance to precipitate innovation ; in times of pacific enjoyment a steady disregard of Government seduction. Human nature is weak, and we must not expect from any body of men, however constituted, a steady adherence to duty under such circumstances of varied trial and difficulty ; but experience has proved, that it may be expected, with some probability, among an aristocratic body, because their interests are permanent, and equally endangered by each set of perils ; but that it is utterly chimerical to look for it among the representatives of a body of peasants or little proprietors, unmingled with any considerable intermixture of the higher classes of society. But the Revolution has extinguished

these classes in France, and therefore it has not left the elements out of which to frame a constitutional monarchy.

These circumstances explain a fact singularly illustrative of the present state of parties in France, and the power to which the ultimate appeal is made, viz. the eminent and illustrious persons by whom the daily press is conducted. Every one knows by what class in society the daily press is conducted in England : it is in the hands of persons of great ability, but in general of inferior grade in society. If the leading political characters do occasionally contribute an article, it is done under the veil of secrecy, and is seldom admitted by the author, with whatever fame it may have been attended. But in France the case is quite the reverse. There the leading political characters, the highest of the nobles, the first men in the State, not only contribute regularly to the daily or periodical press, but avow and glory in their doing so. Not only the leading literary characters, as Chateaubriand, Guizot, Thiers, and others, regularly write for the daily press, but many of the Peers of France conduct or contribute to the public newspapers. The *Gazette de France* and *Quotidienne* are supported by contributions from the Royalist nobility ; the *Journal des Debats* is conducted by a Peer of France. So far from being considered as a discredit, or a thing to be concealed, these eminent men pride themselves on the influence they thus have on public opinion. The reason is obvious : they are the speakers before the real National Assembly of France, the National Guard and armed force of Paris. Consideration and dignity will ever attend the persons whose exertions directly lead to the possession of political power. *When, in the progress of democratic changes, the Reformed Parliament of England has sunk as low in public estimation as the Chamber of Deputies in France, the Dukes and Earls of England, if such a class exist, will become the editors of newspapers, and pride themselves in the occupation.*

The taxation of France is extremely heavy, and has been increased to a most extraordinary degree since the Revolution of July. In a table below,* will be found a return of the

* Budgets of France for the last ten years :—

1824,.....	951,992,000	francs, or	£38,100,000
1825,.....	946,098,000	do.	37,100,000
1826,.....	942,518,000	do.	37,800,000

Budgets of the last ten years, lately published in Paris by authority of Government. From this it appears that the expenditure of the last year of Charles X. was 950,000,000 francs, or about £39,000,000 sterling, while that of the first year of Louis Philippe was above 1,500,000,000 francs, or £60,000,000. Thus, while the Three Glorious Days diminished every man's property by a *third*, it added to the national burdens by a *half*. Such are the blessings of democratic ascendancy.

The taxation of France has become an evil of the very greatest magnitude, and with every addition made to democratic power, it has become worse. The property tax is nominally *thirteen per cent* on the annual value ; but by the arbitrary and unfair way in which valuations are taken, it frequently amounts to twenty, sometimes to thirty per cent, on what is really received by the proprietor. Professional persons, whose income is fluctuating, pay an income tax on a graduated scale ; and the indirect taxes bring in about 500,000,000 francs, or £20,000,000 sterling. The direct taxes amount to about 350,000,000 francs, or £14,000,000 sterling ; a much heavier burden than the income tax was on England, for the national income of England is much greater than that of France. As the result of their democratic efforts, the French have fixed on themselves national burdens nearly three times as heavy as those which were so much complained of in the time of Louis XVI. ;* and greatly more oppressive than those which the Revolutionary war has imposed on the English people.

Nor is this all. In addition to this enormous increase of taxation, the Revolution of July has occasioned the sale of a very large portion of the royal domains. In every part of France, the crown lands and forests have been alienated to a very great extent ; and the words which so often meet a traveller's eyes, "*Biens patrimoniaux de la couronne à vendre*," indicate too clearly how universally the ruthless

1827,.....	986,527,000 francs, or £38,730,000
1828,.....	939,343,000 do. 37,330,000
1829,.....	975,703,000 do. 38,840,000
1830,.....	981,510,000 do. 38,930,000
1831,.....	1,511,500,000 do. 60,000,000
1832,.....	1,100,506,000 do. 44,000,000
1833,.....	1,120,394,000 do. 44,500,000

* They were then about £20,000,000 a-year.

hand of the spoiler has been laid on the remaining public estates of the realm.

The result of all this is, not only that no real freedom exists in France, but that the elements of constitutional liberty do not exist. Everything depends on the will of the Capital : and its determination is so much swayed, at present at least, by the public press, and armed force in the capital, that no reliance on the stability of any system of government can be placed. The first Revolution concentrated all the powers of government in the metropolis ; the second vested them in the armed force of its garrison and citizens. Henceforth the strife of faction is likely to be a mere struggle for the possession of the public offices, and the immense patronage with which they are accompanied ; but no measures for the extension of public freedom will, to all appearance, be attempted. If the Republican party were to dethrone Louis Philippe, they would raise the most violent outcry about the triumph of freedom, and in the midst of it quietly take possession of the Police-office, the Telegraph, the Treasury, and begin to exercise the vast powers of government for their own behoof in the most despotic manner. No other system of administration is practicable in France. After the state to which it has been reduced by its two Revolutions, a constitutional monarchy, such as existed in Great Britain prior to the Revolution of 1832—that is, a monarchy in which the powers of sovereignty were really shared by the Crown, the Nobles, and the people—could not stand in France for a week. The populace of Paris and their despotic leaders, or the Crown with its civil and military employées, would swallow up supreme power in a moment.

Every government, in the long run, must be founded on one of three bases : Either the representation and attachment of all the great interests of the State ; or the force of a powerful and devoted soldiery ; or the influence of power derived from the possession of all the patronage and appointments in the kingdom. Constitutional monarchies, the glory of European civilisation, are founded on the first ; Asiatic despotisms on the last. By the destruction of all the intermediate classes between the throne and the peasant, the French have rendered the construction of a representative

system and a limited throne impossible : they have now to choose only between the fetters of a military, or the corruption of an Oriental despotism ; between the government of the Prætorian guards, or the servility of the Byzantine empire. They are perpetually declaiming about the new era which their Revolution has opened in human affairs, and the interminable career of modern civilisation : let them fix their eyes on the Court of the Great Mogul and the Ryots of Hindostan, and beware lest their changes afford a new confirmation of the old adage, That there is nothing new under the sun ; and the dreams of Republican enthusiasm terminate at last in the strife of eunuchs and the jealousy of courtesans.

Notwithstanding this, however, the character of the French Government has been essentially changed by the Revolution of the Barricades. It possesses now a degree of power, vigour, and despotic authority, to which there has been nothing comparable since the days of Napoleon. The facility with which it overturned the great democratic revolt at the cloister of St Merri in June 1832, and at Lyons in November 1831, both of which were greatly more formidable than that of the Three Days, is a sufficient proof of this assertion. The deeds of despotism, the rigorous acts of Government, which are now in daily operation under the Citizen King, could never have been attempted during the Restoration. Charles X. declared Paris in a state of siege, and issued an edict against the liberty of the press ; and in a few days, in consequence, he was precipitated from his throne. Marshal Soult declared Paris in a state of siege, and still more rigidly fettered the press ; and the act of vigour confirmed instead of weakening his sovereign's authority. It is the daily complaint of the Republican press, that the acts of Government are now infinitely more rigorous than they have ever been since the fall of Napoleon, and that the nation under the Restoration would never have tolerated the vexatious restraints which are now imposed upon its freedom. To give one or two examples from the newspapers lying before us.

“ Yesterday evening, twenty-eight persons, accused of seditious practices, were arrested and sent to prison by the agents of the police. Never did

tyranny advance with such rapid strides as it is doing at the present time."—*Tribune*, Aug. 20.

"Yesterday night, eighteen more persons, accused of Republican practices, were sent to prison. How long will the citizens of Paris permit a despotism to exist among them, to which there has been nothing comparable since the days of Napoleon?"—*Tribune*, Aug. 21.

"More barracks are in course of being erected in the neighbourhood of Graulle. If matters go on much longer at this rate, Paris will contain more soldiers than citizens."—*Tribune*, Aug. 23.

If Charles X. or Louis XVIII. had adventured upon the extraordinary steps of sending state prisoners by the hundred to the Castle of Mount St Michael in Normandy, or erecting an additional prison of vast dimensions near Père la Chaise, to receive the overflowings of the other jails in Paris, maintaining 40,000 or 50,000 men constantly in garrison in the capital, or placing a girdle of fortified bastilles round its walls, the vehemence of the public clamour would either have rendered necessary the abandonment of the measures, or straightway precipitated them from the throne. All parties now admit that France possessed as much real freedom as was consistent with public order under the Bourbons; there is not one which pretends that any of that liberty is still enjoyed. They are completely at variance, indeed, as to the necessity of its removal; the Republicans maintaining that an unnecessary and odious despotism has been established; the *Juste Milieu*, that a powerful government is the only remaining barrier between France and democratic anarchy, and, as such, is absolutely indispensable for the preservation of order. But all are agreed that the constitutional freedom of the Restoration no longer exists.

An attentive observation of the present state of France is all that is requisite to show the causes of these apparently anomalous facts; of the tempered rule, limited authority, and constitutional sway of the Bourbons, in spite of the absolute frame of government which they received from Napoleon and the Revolution; and the despotic rigour and irresistible force of the present dynasty, notwithstanding the democratic transports which seated it upon the throne. Such a survey will, at the same time, throw a great and important light upon the final effect of the First Revolution on the cause of freedom, and go far to vindicate the government of that superintending Wisdom, which, even in

this world, compels vice to work out its own deserved and memorable punishment.

The practical and efficient control upon the executive authority, in every State, is to be found in the jealousy of the middle and lower orders of the rule of the higher, who are in possession of the reins of power. This is the force which really coerces the Government in every State; it is to be found in the tumults of Constantinople, or the anarchy of Persia, as well as in the constitutional Opposition of the British Parliament. The representative system only gives a regular and constitutional channel to the restraining power, without which society might degenerate into the anarchy of Poland, or be disgraced by the strife of the Turkish Seraglio.

As long as this jealousy remains entire among the people, and the fabric of government is sufficiently strong to resist its attacks on any of its necessary functions—as long as it is a drag on its movements, not the ruling power, the operations of the Executive are subjected to a degree of restraint which constitutes a limited monarchy, and diffuses general freedom. This is the natural and healthful state of society; where the people, disqualified by their multitude and their habits from the task of government, fall into their proper sphere of observing and controlling its movements; and the aristocracy, disqualified by their limited number from the power of effectually controlling the Executive, if possessed by the people, occupy their appropriate station in forming part of the Government, and supporting the Throne. The popular body is as unfit to govern the State, as the aristocracy, standing alone, is to defend its liberties against a democratic Executive. History has many instances to exhibit, of liberty existing for ages with a senate holding the reins, and a populace checking its encroachments; it has not one to show, of the same blessing being found under a democracy in possession of the Executive, with the defence of public freedom intrusted to a displaced aristocracy. From the Revolution of 1688 to that of 1832, the annals of England presented the perfect specimen of public freedom flourishing under the first form of government; it

remains to be seen whether it will subsist for any length of time under the second.

Experience, accordingly, has demonstrated, what theory had long asserted, that the overthrow of the liberty of all free States has arisen from the usurpation of the executive authority by the democracy; and that, as long as the reins of power are in the hands of the nobles, the jealousy of the commons was an adequate security to the cause of freedom. Rome long maintained its liberties, notwithstanding the contests of the patricians and plebeians, while the authority of the senate was unimpaired; but when the aristocracy, under Cato, Brutus, and Pompey, were overturned by the democracy headed by Cæsar, the tyranny of the Emperors rapidly succeeded. The most complete despotism of modern times is to be found in the government of Robespierre and Napoleon, both of whom rose to power on the democratic transports of a successful revolution. Against the encroachments of their natural and hereditary rulers, the sovereign and the nobles, the people, in a constitutional monarchy, are in general sufficiently on their guard; and against their efforts, the increasing power which they acquire from the augmentation of their wealth and intelligence in the later stages of society, is a perfectly sufficient security. But of the despotism of the rulers of their own party—the usurpation of the leaders whom they have themselves seated in the chariot—they are never sufficiently jealous, because they conceive that their own power is deriving fresh accessions of strength from every addition made to the chiefs who have so long combated by their side. This delusion continues universally till it is too late to shake their authority; and on the ruins of a constitutional monarchy, an absolute despotism has been constructed.

Had the first Revolution of France, like the great Rebellion of England, merely passed over the State without uprooting all its institutions, and destroying every branch of its aristocracy, there can be little doubt that a constitutional monarchy might have been established in France, and possibly a hundred and forty years of liberty and happiness have formed, as in Britain, the maturity of its national strength. But the total destruction of all these classes in

the bloody convulsion, and the division of their estates among an innumerable host of little proprietors, rendered the formation of such a monarchy impossible, because one of the elements was wanting which is indispensable to its existence, and no counterpoise remained to the power of the democracy at one time, or of the Executive at another. You might as well make gunpowder without sulphur, as rear up constitutional freedom without a hereditary aristocracy to coerce the people and restrain the throne. "A monarchy," says Bacon, "without an aristocracy, is ever an absolute despotism, for a nobility attempers somewhat the reverence for the line royal." "The Revolution," says Napoleon, "left France absolutely without an aristocracy; and this rendered the formation of a mixed constitution impossible. The government had no lever to rest upon to direct the people; it was compelled to navigate in a single element. The French Revolution has attempted a problem as insoluble as the direction of balloons!"*

When Napoleon seized the helm, therefore, he had no alternative but to see revolutionary anarchy continue in the State, or coerce the people by a military despotism. He chose the latter; and under his firm and resolute government, France enjoyed a degree of prosperity and happiness unknown since the fall of the monarchy. Those who reproach him with departing from the principles of the Revolution, and rearing up a military throne by means of a scaffolding of democratic construction, would do well to show how he could otherwise have discharged the first of duties in governments,—the giving protection and security to the people; how a mixed and tempered constitution could be established, when the violence of the people had totally destroyed their natural and hereditary rulers; and how the passions of a populace, long excited by the uncontrolled riot in power, were to be coerced by a senate composed of salaried dignitaries, destitute either of property or importance, and a body of ignoble deputies, hardly elevated, either in station or acquirements, above the citizens to whom they owed their election.

The overthrow of Napoleon's power, by the arms of Europe, for a time established a constitutional throne in

* *Napoleon's Memoirs.*

France, and gave its inhabitants fifteen years of undeserved freedom and happiness. But this freedom rested on an unstable equilibrium; it had not struck its roots into the substratum of society; it was liable to be overturned by the first shock of adverse fortune. As it was, however, it contributed, in a most essential manner, to deceive the world; to veil the irreparable consequences of the first convulsion; and to make mankind believe that it was possible, on the basis of irreligion, robbery, and murder, to rear up the fair fabric of regulated freedom. We have to thank the Revolution of the Barricades for drawing aside the veil—for displaying the consequences of national delinquency on future ages; and beneath the fair colours of the whited sepulchre, exhibiting the foul appearances of premature corruption and decay.

What gave temporary freedom to France under the Restoration was the prodigious exhaustion of the democratic spirit by the calamities which attended the close of Napoleon's reign; the habits of submission to which his iron government had accustomed the people; the terror produced by the double conquest of Paris by the Allies, the insecure and obnoxious tenure by which the Bourbons held their authority, and the pacific character and personal weakness of that race of sovereigns themselves.

1. The exhaustion of France by the calamities which hurled Napoleon from the throne, undoubtedly had a most powerful effect in coercing for a time the fierce and turbulent passions of the people. It is in the young that the spirit of liberty and the impatience of restraint is ever most fervent, and from their energy that the firmest principles of freedom and the greatest excesses of democracy have equally arisen. But the younger generations of France were, to a degree unprecedented in modern times, mowed down by the revolutionary wars. After seventeen years of more than ordinary consumption of human life, came the dreadful campaigns of 1812, 1813, and 1814; in the first of which, between Spain and Russia, not less than 700,000 men perished by the sword or sickness, while, in the two latter, the extraordinary levies of 1,200,000 men were almost entirely destroyed. By these prodigious efforts, France was literally exhausted; these copious bleedings reduced the body politic

to a state of almost lethargic torpor ; and, accordingly, neither the invasion and disasters of 1814, nor the return of Napoleon in 1815, could rouse the mass of the nation to anything like a state of general excitement. During the first years of the Bourbons' reign, accordingly, they had to rule over a people whose fierce passions had been tamed by unprecedented misfortunes, and their hot blood drained off by a merciless sword ; and it was not till the course of time, and the ceaseless powers of population, had in some degree repaired the void, that that general impatience and restlessness began to be manifested, which arises from the difficulty of finding employment, and is the common precursor of political changes.

2. The government of Napoleon, despotic and unfettered in its original construction, after the 18th Brumaire, had become, in process of time, the most arbitrary and powerful of any in Europe. Between the destruction of all ancient, provincial, and corporate authorities, by the successive revolutionary assemblies, and the complete centralisation of all the powers and influence of the State in the government at Paris, which took place during his government, there was not a vestige of popular power left in France. The people had been accustomed, for fourteen years, to submit to the *prefets*, *sous-prefets*, mayors, *adjoints*, and other authorities appointed by the Central Government at Paris, and they had in a great degree lost the recollection of the intoxicating powers which they exercised during the Revolution. The habit of submission to an absolute Government, which enforced its mandates by 800,000 soldiers, and had 500,000 civil offices in its gift, had in a great degree prepared the country for slavery. To the direction of this immense and strongly constructed machine the Bourbons succeeded ; and it went on for a number of years working of itself, without the people generally being conscious of the helm having passed from the firm and able grasp of Napoleon to the inexperienced and feeble hands of his legitimate successors. Louis XVIII., indeed, gave a charter to his subjects : " *Vive la Charte !* " became the cry of the supporters of his throne : deputies were chosen, who met at Paris ; a Chamber of Peers was established, and the forms of a constitutional monarchy prevailed. But it is not by conferring the forms of a limited monarchy that its spirit can be acquired, or the necessary

checks either on the throne or the populace established. France, under the Bourbons, went through the forms of a representative government, but she had hardly a vestige of its spirit. Her people were composed of a few hundred thousand ardent citizens in the towns, who longed for democratic power and a republican government, and thirty millions of peasants and workmen, who were ready to submit to any government established by the ruling population of the capital. To coerce the former, or invigorate the latter, no means remained; and therefore it is that a constitutional monarchy no longer exists in France.

3. The consternation produced by the overthrow of Napoleon's throne, and the double occupation of Paris by the Allied troops, went far to uphold a Government which had risen up under their protection. While all the army and ardent patriots of the capital insisted that it had been surrendered by treachery in both cases, and could never have been conquered by force of arms, the astounding events produced a great and awful impression throughout France, which is far from being as yet eradicated. There are some calamities which remain long in the recollection of mankind. Volatile, susceptible of new impressions, and inconsiderate as great part of the French undoubtedly are, the double capture of their capital in two campaigns sank deep and heavily in their minds. It wounded them in the most sensitive part, the feeling of national glory; and excited a painful doubt, heretofore unknown, of the ability of the Great Nation to resist a combined attack from the Northern Powers. This feeling still subsists; it may have little influence with the young and warlike youth of the capital, but it is strongly impressed upon the more thoughtful and better informed classes of society, and is in an especial manner prevalent among the National Guard of the metropolis, to whom, even more than the regular army, the nation looks for the regulation of its movements. It was to the prevalence of this feeling that the existence of the Bourbon Government, during the fifteen years of the Restoration, was mainly owing; and so prevalent was it even on the eve of their overthrow, that the revolt of the Barricades originated with, and was long supported solely by the very lowest classes; and it was not till the defection

of the army, and the imbecility of the Government, had rendered it more than doubtful whether a revolution was not at hand, that they were joined by any considerable accession of strength from the educated or middle classes of society. The same feeling of secret dread at the Northern Powers still exists, notwithstanding the accession of England to the league of revolutionary Governments. Whatever the republican party may say to the contrary, nothing is more certain than that the Cabinet of Louis Philippe has been supported in all its principal measures, and especially in the proclamation of a state of siege by Marshal Soult, and the pacific system with the Continental Powers, by a great majority of all the persons of any wealth or consideration in Paris, now in possession, through the National Guard, of a preponderating influence in the capital, and, consequently, over all France.

The circumstances which have been mentioned, contributed strongly to establish a despotic government under the Bourbons—the only kind of regular authority which the convulsions of the Revolution have rendered practicable in France ; but to counteract these, and temper the rigour of the Executive, there were other circumstances of an equally important character, which gradually went on increasing in power, until they finally overbalanced the others, and overturned the Government of the Restoration.

1. The first of these circumstances was the extreme national dissatisfaction which attended the way in which the Bourbons reascended the throne. For a monarch of France to enter its capital in the rear of a victorious invader, is the most unlikely way that can be imagined to gain the affections of its inhabitants ; but to do this twice over, and regain the throne on the second occasion in consequence of such a thunderbolt as the Battle of Waterloo, was a misfortune which rendered the popularity of the dynasty out of the question. The people naturally connected together the two events ; they associated the Republican sway with the tricolor flag and the conquest of Europe, and the Bourbon dynasty with the disasters which had preceded their restoration : forgetting what was the truth, that it was under the tricolor that all these disasters had been incurred ; and that the white flag was the olive branch which saved them from

calamities which they themselves had felt to be intolerable. This general feeling of irritation at the unparalleled calamities in which Napoleon's reign terminated, was naturally and skilfully turned to account by the Republican party. They constantly associated together the Bourbon reign with the Russian bayonets; and held out the sovereigns of the Restoration rather as the viceroys of Wellington, or the satraps of Alexander, than the monarchs either by choice or inheritance of the Franks. This prejudice, which had too much support from the unfortunate coincidence of Napoleon's disasters with the commencement of their reign, soon spread deeply and universally among the Liberal part of the people; and the continuance of the Bourbon dynasty on the throne came to be considered as the badge of national servitude, which, on the first dawn of returning liberation, should be removed.

2. The abolition of the national colours by the Bourbon princes, and the studious endeavour made to obliterate the monuments and recollection of Napoleon, was a puerile weakness, from which the worst possible effects ensued to their government. To suppose that it was possible to obliterate the remembrance of his mighty achievements, and substitute Henry IV. and Saint Louis for the glories of the Empire, was worse than childish, and, as might have been expected, totally failed in its object. In vain his portrait was proscribed, his initials effaced from the edifices, his name hardly mentioned except with vituperation by the Ministerial organs; the admiration for his greatness only increased from the efforts made to suppress it; and of his, as of the images of Brutus and Cassius at the funeral of Junia, it might truly be said, "*Viginti clarissimarum familiarum imagines antelatae sunt, sed præfulgebant Cassius atque Brutus, et eo ipso quod effigies eorum non videbantur.*"*

The universal burst of public enthusiasm when the tri-color flag was rehoisted on the Tuileries, and the statue of the hero replaced on the pillar in the Place Vendôme, in July last, and the innumerable pictures and statues which have been exposed in every town and village of France since the prohibition was removed, demonstrate how power-

* TACITUS.

ful and general this feeling was, and exposes the enormity of the error which the Bourbons committed in endeavouring to bury it in oblivion. The tricolor flag was associated in the minds of the whole young and active part of the French population with the days of their glory, the white standard with the commencement of their humiliation. To compel them to adopt the one and abandon the other, was an error in policy of the most enormous kind. It was to perpetuate the feeling of national disgrace ; to impose upon the nation what they considered as the livery of servitude ; to debar them from openly giving vent to feelings which swelled their hearts even to bursting. The Revolution of July was less against the edicts of Polignac than the white standard on the dome of the Tuileries ; and the Citizen King owes his throne mainly to the tricolor flag which waves above his head in that august abode.

3. The religious feelings of the exiled family, natural and estimable in persons exposed to the calamities which they had undergone, formed undoubtedly an inherent weakness in the government of the Restoration, to which their fall was in a great degree owing. From whatever cause it may have arisen, the fact is certain, that hatred at every species of religious observance is the most profound and inveterate feeling which has survived the Revolution. Not that the French are wholly an irreligious people—for in a numerous portion of the community, especially in the rural districts, the reverence for devotion is undiminished—but that the active and energetic class in towns, upon whom the centralisation of power produced by the Revolution has exclusively conferred political importance and the means of influencing the public mind, are almost entirely of that description. To these men the sight of priests in their sacerdotal habits crossing the Place Carrousel, and entering the royal apartments, was absolute gall and wormwood. The Royalists had not discernment enough to see, that they might encourage the substantial parts of religion, without perpetually bringing before the public eye the obnoxious parts of its external ceremonial. They fell at once under the government of pious and estimable, but weak and ignorant ecclesiastics, who were totally incapable of steering the vessel of the State through the shoals and quicksands with which it was

on all sides beset. Thence arose an inherent weakness in the Government of the Restoration, which went far to counterbalance the vast political authority which the centralisation of every species of influence in the public offices in Paris had occasioned. They received a machine of vast power, and apparently irresistible strength, but the prejudice of the people at their political and religious principles was so strong, that they could not find the firm hands requisite to direct it.

4. The pacific and indolent character of the Bourbon princes, and the timorous policy which they were constrained to adopt, from the disastrous circumstances which had preceded their accession to the throne, prevented them from reviving, by personal qualities or brilliant achievements, any of that popularity which so many circumstances had contributed to weaken. A thirst for military glory ever has been the leading characteristic of the French people. A pacific and popular king of France is a contradiction in terms. The princes who dwell most strongly in their recollection, Henry IV., Louis XIV., and Napoleon, were all distinguished either for their military achievements, or for the great conquests which were effected in their reign. If a king of France were to possess the virtue of Aristides, the integrity of Cato, the humanity of Marcus Aurelius, and the wisdom of Solomon, and remain constantly at peace, he would speedily become unpopular.* The only regal activity which, in their estimation, can in some degree compensate the want of military distinction, is a decided turn for the embellishment of Paris. Napoleon's vast popularity, after his external victories, was mainly owing to his internal decorations; the Pillar of Austerlitz and the Bourse almost rivalled, in public effect, the overthrow of Austria and the subjugation of Prussia. But in neither of these lines of activity was the family of the Restoration calculated to acquire distinction. They remained, partly from inclination, partly from necessity, almost constantly at peace; they languidly and slowly completed the great works undertaken by Napoleon, but commenced little new themselves; they neither pushed their armies across the Rhine, nor their

* Mr Burke was perfectly right when he said, that the restored monarch must be constantly in the saddle.

new constructions into the obscurer parts of Paris. The Parisians could neither recount to strangers the victories they had won, nor point with exultation to the edifices they had constructed. They remained in consequence, for the whole fifteen years that they sat upon the throne, tolerated and obeyed, but neither admired nor loved ; and the load of obloquy which attached to them from the disasters which preceded their accession, was lightened by no redeeming achievements which followed their elevation.

From the combination of these singular and opposing circumstances, there resulted a mixed and tempered government in France, for the brief period of the Restoration, without any of the circumstances existing by which that blessing can be permanently secured ; without either a powerful aristocracy, or an efficient and varied representation of the people. The machine of government was that of an absolute despotism, from the complete centralisation of every species of influence in the public offices at Paris, and the total absence of any authority in the provinces to counter-balance their influence ; but the royal family had neither the energy, nor the qualities, nor the fortune, requisite to wield its irresistible powers. Nothing can be more extraordinary, accordingly, than the state of France under Louis XVIII. and Charles X. The Government were almost constantly declining in popularity : the republican majority in the Chamber of Deputies was, with some variations, almost constantly increasing : at last it rose to such a height as to choke up the wheels of administration, and render a *coup d'état*, or a resignation of the throne, an unavoidable alternative. But although the *family of the Bourbons* was thus declining in influence, the *power of government* was undergoing no serious alteration ; no efficient checks upon the executive, arising from the combination of the lasting interests of the state to coerce its encroachments, were growing up : the weakness of the throne arose from dislike to the reigning family, not from aversion to the power with which they were invested. They were at last overturned, like the sultans in the Seraglio, or the Roman emperors on the Palatine Mount, by a vast and well-concerted urban tumult, seconded to a wish by the imbecility and weakness of the ruling Administration ; and the vast

machine of a despotic government passed unimpaired into the hands of their more energetic assailants.

The Revolution of the Barricades at once put an end to the temporising system of the Restoration, and drew aside the veil which, retained by Bourbon weakness, had so long concealed the stern features of despotic power. The fatal legacy bequeathed to France by the sins and the atrocities of the first Revolution, was then apparent : the bonds, the inevitable and perpetual bonds of servitude, were exposed to public gaze. In all the particulars which constituted the weakness of the Restoration, and paralysed the machine of despotic government, from hatred at the hands which wielded it, the Citizen King had the advantage. The white flag had been a perpetual eyesore to the ardent youth of France, and the white flag was torn down : the tricolor had been the object of their secret worship, and the tricolor was displayed from every tower in France : the recollection of defeat had clouded the first days of the Restoration, and the first days of the Revolution of July were those of astounding triumph : the observance of Sunday and religious forms had exasperated an infidel metropolis, under a priest-ridden dynasty, and their successors allowed them to revel in every species of amusement and license on the seventh day : the long continuance of peace had thrown into sullen discontent the ardent youth of the metropolis, and the establishment of a revolutionary throne promised, sooner or later, to bring about a desperate conflict with the legitimate monarchs of Europe. The prospect of the convulsions into which England was speedily thrown by the contagion of this great example, contributed not a little to fan this exulting flame ; and in the passing of the Reform Bill, the French democrats beheld a lasting triumph to the Gallican party in this country, and an achievement which consoled them for the disasters of Trafalgar and Waterloo.

These combined circumstances completely restored the vigour and efficiency of the central authority at Paris over all France. In possession of a frame of government the strongest and most despotic of any in Europe, supported by the ardent and influential part of the population in the capital, fanned by the gales of public passion and prejudice,

they speedily became irresistible. Everything contributed to increase the power of Government. The public hatred at hereditary succession, which forced on the abolition of the House of Peers and the appointment of their successors by the Crown, demolished the last barrier (and it was but a feeble one) which the preceding convulsions had left between the throne and absolute dominion. The public impatience for war, which made them bear without murmuring an increase of the national expenditure, on the accession of Louis Philippe, from 980,000,000 francs to 1,511,000,000 in one year, enabled the Government to raise the army from 180,000 to 420,000 men, and fan the military spirit through all France by the establishment of National Guards. The Chamber of Deputies, thrown into the shade by the tricolor flag and the reviews in the Place Carrousel, was soon forgotten; its members, destitute, for the most part, of property, consideration, or weight in their respective departments, speedily fell into contempt; the Opposition was gained over, or withdrew in despair from a hopeless cause; and a party which, under the white flag and the priest-ridden Government, had risen to a majority in the Legislature, was soon reduced to a miserable remnant of six or eight members. The debates in the Chamber have almost disappeared; they are hardly ever reported; all eyes are turned from the Legislature to the War-office; from the declamations of disappointed patriots, to the acclamations of brilliant battalions; from a thought on the extinction of public freedom, to the exhilarating prospect of foreign conquest.

It is this combination of a despotic Executive, in possession of all the influence in the State, with the infusion of popularity into the *system of government*, which has enabled Louis Philippe, notwithstanding his extreme *personal* unpopularity, to carry through obnoxious and tyrannical measures, never contemplated by Napoleon in the zenith of his power. One of the most remarkable of these is the encircling Paris with fortified posts, or, as the Republicans call it, the project "d'embastiller Paris." To those who recollect the transports of enthusiasm with which the storming of the Bastille was received over all France in 1789, it must appear the most extraordinary of all things that a Revolutionary

Government should venture upon the step of constructing TEN BASTILLES, many larger, all stronger, than the old one, around Paris, in such situations as absolutely to command the metropolis, by enabling the Government, at pleasure, to intercept its supplies of provisions ; yet this has been done, and is now doing. Vincennes, situated a league beyond the Barricade de Trone, is undergoing a thorough repair ; and its cannon, placed within a regular fortification, will completely command the great road leading into the Fauxbourg St Antoine. Other and similar fortresses are in the course of construction in a circle round Paris, at the distance of about two miles from each other, and a mile, or a mile and a half, beyond the external barrier. When completed, they will at once give the Government the command of the rebellious capital ; not a pound of provisions can enter a circle inhabited by nearly a million of souls, but under the guns of these formidable fortresses. The plans were completed, the ground was all purchased, the works were going forward, when they were interrupted by the cries of part of the National Guard, in defiling before the King on the 29th July last. The Chamber of Deputies had in vain refused, in accordance with the wishes of the capital, a grant of money for the purpose ; the Crown was going on of its own authority, and from its own funds. And though the undertaking has been suspended for a time from the cause above mentioned, excepting at Vincennes, which is rapidly advancing, Government openly announce their intention of resuming it next spring, when a majority of the Chamber will be won over to give it their support.

The most singular circumstance connected with the present political state of France, is the co-existence of a despotic military government with a wild and intemperate republican press in the capital. This may appear incredible, but nevertheless it is certain that it exists ; and it constitutes an element by no means to be overlooked, in considering the future prospects of the country ; because it may, in a moment, hurl the present dynasty from the throne, and elevate a new family, or different Executive, to the possession of its despotic powers. To give only a single example of the length to which this extravagance of the press

is carried, we extract merely at random an article which recently appeared in the *Tribune*.

“Those who place themselves in the current of political change should consider well whither it will lead them, before they embark on its waves. The authors of the Revolt on the 9th Thermidor* were far from intending to extinguish public freedom; but, nevertheless, the reaction against liberty has been incessant since the fall of Robespierre, with the exception, perhaps, of the Three Days of July.

“It is in vain to say that it was Napoleon, or the Restoration, or Louis Philippe, who extinguished the freedom of France: it was the overthrow of Robespierre which was the fatal stroke. We have never since known what liberty was; we have lived only under a succession of tyrants.

“Impressed with these ideas, a band of patriots have commenced the republication of the speeches of Robespierre, St Just, and Marat, which will be rendered accessible to the very humblest of the people, by the moderate price of a sous a number, at which it is to be sold. We earnestly recommend the works of these immortal patriots to our readers. They will find everything that philosophy could discover, or learning reveal, or humanity desire, or eloquence enforce, in their incomparable productions.”—*Tribune*, Aug. 20.

Again, in the next number we read as follows:—

“The *soidisant* patriots of the day are in a total mistake when they pretend that it is an erroneous system of taxation which is the root of the public discontents. This is, no doubt, an evil; but it is nothing compared to that which flows from a defective system of social organisation.

“The tyranny of the rich over the poor is the real plague which infests society; the eternal source of oppression, in comparison of which all others are but as dust in the balance. What have we gained by the Revolution? The substitution of the Chaussée d’Antin for the Fauxbourg St Germain—an aristocracy of bankers for one of nobles. What have the people gained by the change? Are they better fed, or clothed, or lodged, than before? What is it to them that their oppressors are no longer counts or dukes? Tyranny can come from the bureau as well as the palace. There will be no real regeneration to France till a more equal distribution of PROPERTY strikes at the root of all the calamities of mankind.

“The principles of pure and unmixed democracy are those of absolute wisdom, of unwearied philanthropy, of universal happiness. When the rule of the people is completely established, the reign of justice, freedom, equality, and happiness will commence; all the evils of humanity will disappear before the awakened energies of mankind.”—*Tribune*, Aug. 21.

When principles such as these, clothed in insinuating language, and enforced with no small share of ability, are daily poured forth from the Parisian press, and read by admiring multitudes among its ardent and impassioned population, we are led to examine how society can exist with such doctrines familiarly spread among the lower orders. But the phenomenon becomes still more extraordinary, when it is perceived that these anarchical doctrines are in close juxtaposition to the most complete and rigorous des-

* The day when Robespierre was overthrown.

potism, to which the people under successive Governments submit without any practical attempt at resistance ; that the citizens who indulge in these absurd speculations are content to wait for hours at the Police Office, before they can go ten leagues from the capital, and go quietly to jail with the first gens-d'armes who meet them on the road without their passports.

The truth is, that the French, during all the phases of the Revolution, as Napoleon remarked, not only never tasted one hour of real freedom, but never formed a conception of what it was. The efforts of the factions who for forty years have torn its bosom, have all been directed to one object, the acquisition of political power by themselves, without bestowing a thought on the far more important matter of diffusing general protection. The consequence is, that the exertions of the party in opposition are all directed to one object, the displacing of their adversaries from their places in administration, or overturning the family on the throne, without the slightest intention of remodelling the frame of government, so as to impose any effectual check on the Executive. If the Republican Opposition were to succeed to the helm, they would probably push through such a change in the composition of the electoral colleges as might secure for their party the predominance in the Legislature ; but they would make as few concessions to public freedom as was done by their predecessors, Robespierre and St Just. The Police would still fetter the actions of every man in France ; the *impôt foncier* would still carry off from thirteen to twenty per cent of every income from property ; the Government officers at Paris would still dispose of every office in the kingdom, from the Minister at the head of the army, to the scavenger at the tail of the cleaning department.

The party in opposition, who long for the enjoyment of power and offices, has been immensely weakened by the result of the Three Days. The Royalists, indeed, are everywhere excluded from the slightest participation in the Government ; but so are they from any influence in the Legislature ; and a miserable minority of twenty or thirty members finds it quite in vain to attempt any struggle in Parliament. The great body of the popular party have got

into office in consequence of their triumph : it may safely be affirmed, that not less than 300,000 Liberals are now the *employés* of administration. To give only one instance of the amazing extent to which the promotion of their partisans has taken place, there are 44,000 communes in France, and each commune has its mayor and adjoints. There are thus 88,000 official magistrates of this description in the kingdom, and they were all on the Revolution, filled up from the Tuileries with Liberal *employés*. Thus the patriots of France are now very generally and comfortably ensconced in official situations ; and it is utterly impossible, in consequence, to rouse them to any hostility to the ruling power. In this way the Republican party are, to a great extent, won over to the Government, and they can afford to allow the disappointed remnant of their faction to vent their discontent in democratic publications. This complete division of the Liberal party, and secure anchoring of four-fifths of its members by the strong tenure of official emolument, which has followed the Revolution of July, is the true secret of the present strength of Government ; for the discontented Royalists in the provinces, though numerous and brave, will never be able to throw off the central authority of the capital.

It is not to be imagined, however, from all this, that the government of Louis Philippe is established on a solid foundation. No government can be so, which is founded not on the great and lasting interests of the state, but on its fleeting passions—which depends not on the property of the country, but on the mob of the metropolis. The throne of the Barricades rests entirely on the armed forces of the capital. A breath may *unmake* it, as a breath has made. A well-concerted urban revolt, the defection of a single regiment, supported by a majority of the National Guards, may any day seat a Consul, a General, or Henry V., on the throne. It has lost popularity immensely with the Movement party, comprehending all the ardent and desperate characters, by persisting in an anti-republican policy, and remaining steadily at peace. Its incessant and rigorous prosecution of the press, though inadequate hitherto to extirpate that last remnant of popular sovereignty, has exposed it to the powerful assaults of that mighty engine. The Sovereign on

the throne, and the whole Royal Family, are neglected or disliked. A vigorous and successful foreign war would at once restore its popularity, and utterly silence all the clamour about the loss of freedom ; but without the aid of that powerful stimulant, it is impossible to say how soon the present dynasty may be overturned, and a fresh race or government be thrown up by another eruption of the revolutionary volcano.

But come what race or form of sovereignty there may, the government of Paris will equally remain a perfect and uncontrolled despotism over France. This is the great and final result of the first Revolution, which should ever be steadily kept in view by the adjoining States. Let Henry V. or the Duke of Orleans, Marshal Soult or Odillon Barrot, succeed to supreme power, the result will be the same. The bones of Old France have been broken by the vast rolling-stone which has passed over the State ; New France has not the elements within it to frame a constitutional throne. The people must remain slaves to the central Government, because they have destroyed the superior classes who might shield them from its oppression. Asiatic has succeeded to European civilisation, and political power is no longer to be found independent of regal appointment. All superiority depends upon the possession of office ; the distinctions of hereditary rank, the descent of considerable property, have alike disappeared ; over a nation of Ryots, who earn a scanty subsistence by the sweat of their brow, is placed a horde of Egyptian taskmasters who wring from them the fruits of their toil, and a band of Prætorian guards who dispose at pleasure of their Government.

In one particular, little understood on the English side of the Channel, the similarity of the result of French regeneration to the institutions of Oriental despotism, is most striking. The weight of *direct* taxation is at once the mark and the result of despotic government. It is remarked by Gibbon, that the great test of the practical power of Government is to be found in the extent to which it can carry the *direct payments* by the people to the treasury ; and that whenever the majority of imposts are indirect, it is a proof that it is compelled to consult the inclinations and feelings of its subjects. He adduces as an illustration of

this profound yet obvious remark, (all profound remarks, when once made, appear obvious,) the excessive weight of direct taxation in the latter period of the Roman Empire. In Gaul, in the time of Constantine, the capitation-tax had risen to the enormous sum of nine pounds sterling for every freeman ; an impost so excessive, that among the poorer citizens it could be made up only by several being allowed to club together to form one head. Sismondi, in like manner, observes, that the exorbitant weight of direct taxes was the great cause of the progressive depopulation of the Roman Empire. At this moment the burden of the fixed payment exacted from a Turkish pashalic, which is never allowed to diminish, and consequently with the decline of the inhabitants becomes intolerable, is the great cause of the rapid depopulation of the Ottoman Empire. In Hindostan and China, the proportion of the fruits of the soil which goes directly to the Government, varies from 30 to 50 per cent.

Akin to this, the last and well-known result of despotic oppression, is the enormous weight of the direct taxes in France. The tax on proprietors, as already noticed, is fixed at present at 13 per cent ; but this, oppressive as it would appear in this country, where the weight of democratic despotism is only beginning to be felt, is nothing to the real burden which falls on the unhappy proprietors. By the valuation or *cadastre* made by the Government surveyor, the real weight of the burden is liable to indefinite increase, and in general brings it up to 20, sometimes 30 per cent.* The valuation is taken, not from the actual receipt of the owner, but from what it is *estimated* his property is worth ; and as the smiles of Government are directed towards these official gentlemen nearly in proportion to the amount to which they can raise the valuation of their district, the injustice committed in this way is most extreme. We know many properties on the Garonne and Rhone, where, from the exorbitance of the valuation, the tax comes to 35 and 40 per cent on the produce. Its weight may be judged of by the fact, that this direct impost produces

* From the infinite subdivision of land in France, and the continual change of hands through which it passes, it in fact belongs in property to no one individual, but to the Public Treasury, from the excessive weight of direct taxation and the duties on alienations of any kind.—*Donnadieu*, 256.

yearly 350,000,000 francs, or about £14,000,000 sterling, which almost entirely comes from the landowners.* Now the income-tax of Great Britain during the war produced just that sum ; and most certainly the *income* from *all sources* of the British Empire at that period was double the amount of that now enjoyed by the *proprieters* of France.† The result of this is, that the French landowners pay, on the whole, 20 per cent on the annual worth of their incomes. In forty years from the commencement of their Revolutionary troubles, the French have got nearly to the standard fixed on the Ryots of Hindostan, in the lightest taxed districts of India ; and more than tripled the *taille*, which was held forth as an insupportable burden at their commencement ! Let them go on as they are doing, and in half a century they will again find the enormous capitation-tax of Constantine fixed about their necks. Thus the result of human folly and iniquity is the same in all ages and countries ; and the identical consequences which flowed fifteen hundred years ago, remotely but surely, from the madness of Gracchus and the democrats of Rome in destroying the Roman aristocracy, is evidently approaching, from the corresponding madness of the French Republicans in extirpating the higher classes of their monarchy.

We have often asked the proprietors in different parts of France, why they did not endeavour to diminish or equalise this enormous burden, which, in the wine provinces especially, is felt as so oppressive. They universally answered that the thing was impossible ; that they had memorialised Napoleon and Louis XVIII., the Chamber of Deputies and Peers, Villèle and the Duc de Richelieu, but all to no purpose. The weight of the *impôt foncier*, the injustice of the *cadastre*, remains unchanged and unchangeable. Four or five millions of little proprietors scattered over the vast expanse of France, a majority of whom have not £5 yearly from their land, can effect nothing against the des-

* Dupin estimates the incomes of proprietors in France at 1,626,000,000 francs, or £65,000,000 ; so that if 350,000,000 francs, or £14,000,000 sterling, is taken from them in the form of direct taxes, the burden is as 14 to 65 on their whole income, or 21 per cent.—See DUPIN, *Force Commerciale de France*, ii. 266.

† The income of official persons is taken at a different rate, varying from 6½ to 8 per cent ; but it forms a trifling part of the direct taxation.

potic central Government of Paris. They themselves say, that the direct burdens on the land are becoming so excessive, that the sovereign is, as in Oriental dynasties, the *real proprietor*, and they are but tenants who labour for his benefit more than their own. Herein may be discerned the hand of Providence, causing the sins of men to work out their own punishment. If the French people had not committed the frightful injustice of confiscating the property of their nobles and clergy, they would now have possessed within themselves a vast body of influential proprietors, capable, as in England under the old Constitution, either in the Upper or Lower House, of preventing or arresting the oppression of the central Government, and the enormous burden of 20 per cent directly laid on land would never have been permitted. But, proceeding as they have done by destroying all the intermediate classes in the State, and leaving only Government *employés* and peasant proprietors, they have cut away the shield which would have protected the poor from the vexation of the central authority, and left themselves and their children for ever exposed to its oppression. They imagined that by laying hold of the land of others, they would step into the comforts and opulence of separate property; but the wages of iniquity seldom prosper in the end, either in nations or individuals. They have fallen in consequence under an oppressive taxation, which has more than counterbalanced all the advantages of the spoil they have acquired; the sovereign has grown up into the real landowner, and the cultivators, instead of becoming the peasants of Switzerland, have degenerated into the Ryots of Hindostan.

The effects of the Revolution of July on the RELIGION of France, is precisely the same as on its political situation. It has drawn aside the thin veil which concealed the effects of the irreligious spirit of the first convulsion, and displayed in its native deformity the consequence of unmooring the human mind from the secure haven of faith and virtue.

That the first Revolution was essentially irreligious in its spirit, that it destroyed not only the teachers and the property, but the very name of Christianity, is universally known. But in this, as in every other respect, the Resto-

ration drew a veil over its ultimate and final consequences. The exiled family returned to the palaces of their fathers, with a profound sense of religion, rendered only the more indelible from the disasters which had preceded their restoration. By the combined effect of their authority and influence, a gloss was thrown over the infidel consequences of the first Revolution ; the priests were reinstated in the smiles of court favour ; the Tuileries again resounded with the strains of devotion ; religious observances were tolerably attended to ; the churches were filled, if not with the faithful, at least with the ambitious ; and promotion, dependent in some degree on attention to the ceremonial of the Catholic faith, drew multitudes to the standard of St Louis. Marshal Soult was to be seen every Sunday parading to church, preceded by an enormous breviary ; he cared not whether the road to power lay by the chapel of the Virgin, or the altar of the Goddess of Reason. Sunday, especially in the last ten years, was well observed in the great towns. Travellers perceived no material difference between the appearance of London and Paris during divine service. Literature, encouraged by this transient glance of sunshine, resumed its place by the side of devotion. The genius of Chateaubriand lent its aid to the Holy Alliance, and poured over the principles of natural and revealed religion a flood of resplendent light ; Michaud traced the history of the Crusaders, and the efforts for the liberation of the Holy Sepulchre, with an antiquary's knowledge and a poet's fire ; Barante revived in the Annals of Burgundian Princes the old and venerable feelings of feudal devotion ; while Guizot, as yet untouched by the seductions of power, traced with admirable ability, to admiring multitudes in the French metropolis, the historical blessings of religious institutions. Almost all observers, misled by these appearances, flattered themselves that the period of the reaction of the human mind against the principles of irreligion had arrived ; that the reign of infidelity was drawing to its close ; and that the French Revolution, nursed amidst the mazes of sophistry and scepticism, was destined to find refuge at last in the eternal truths of religion.

But this sudden extinction of evil and resurrection of good is not the order of nature. Infidelity, nursed for half

a century, is not extinguished in a few years. The robbery of one-third of the national property from the service of the Church is not the way to secure the fruits of virtue : a *hiatus* of ten years in the religious education of the people, snapped asunder a chain which had descended unbroken from the Apostolic ages. These deplorable events were secretly but securely working out their natural consequences, through all the period of the Restoration. The general and profound hatred in towns at the very sight even of an ecclesiastic, was a certain indication of the great extent to which the deadly spirit of infidelity had spread. The Revolution of July at once tore aside the veil, and exposed to view the extraordinary spectacle of a nation in which the classes, who concentrate almost the whole political influence of the State, are almost wholly of an irreligious character. This is to be ascribed chiefly to the long chasm in religious instruction which took place from 1791 to 1800, and the entire assumption of political power under Napoleon, by a class who were entire strangers to any kind of devotion. Such a chasm cannot readily be supplied ; ages must elapse before its effects are obliterated. “*Naturâ tamen,*” says Tacitus, “*infirmittatis humanæ tardiora sunt remedia quam mala ; et ut corpora lente augescunt cito extinguuntur, sic ingenia studiaque oppresseris facilius quam revocaveris.*”

But to whatever cause it is owing, nothing can be more certain, than that infidelity again reigns the lord of the ascendant in Paris. It is impossible to be a week in the metropolis without being sensible of this. It is computed that from 60,000 to 80,000 individuals, chiefly women, or persons of the poorest classes, believe in the Christian religion. The remainder, amounting to about 800,000, make no pretension to such a faith. It is impossible by any external appearances to distinguish Sunday from Saturday, excepting that every species of amusement and dissipation goes on with more spirit on that day than any other. We are no advocates for the over-rigid or Judaical observance of the day of rest. Perhaps some Protestant nations have gone too far in converting the Christian Sunday into the Jewish Sabbath, and preventing on it those innocent recreations which might divert the giddy multitude from hidden debauchery. But without standing up for any rigid or

puritanical ideas, it may safely be affirmed that the *total neglect* of Sunday by nine-tenths of the people, indicates a fixed disregard of religion in any State professing a belief in Christianity. In Paris the shops are all open, the carts all going, the workmen all employed on the early part of Sunday ; and although a part of them are closed after two o'clock in the afternoon, it is not with the slightest intention of joining in any, even the smallest religious duty, that this is done. It is "pour s'amuser," to forget the fatigues of the week in the excitement with which it terminates, that the change takes place. At two o'clock, all who can disengage themselves from their daily toil, rush away in crowds to drink of the intoxicating cup of pleasure. Then the omnibusses roll with ceaseless din in every direction out of the crowded capital, carrying the delighted citizens to St Cloud, St Germain, or Versailles, the Ginguettes of Belleville, or the gardens of Vincennes ; then the Boulevards teem with volatile and happy crowds, delighted by the enjoyment of seeing and being seen ; then the gardens of the Tuileries and the Luxembourg, the Jardin des Plantes, and the Champs Elysées, are enlivened with the young, the gay, and the handsome of both sexes, both rich and poor ; then the splendid drive to the triumphal arch of Neuilly, is filled with the comparatively few equipages which the two revolutions have left to the impoverished hotels of the capital. While these scenes of gaiety and amusement are going on, the priests in each of the principal churches are devoutly performing mass before a few hundred old women, tottering ecclesiastics, or young children, and ten or fifteen Protestant Churches are assembling as many thousands to the duties of the Reformed faith. Such is a Parisian Sunday ; and such the respect for a divine ordinance, which remains in what they ambitiously call the metropolis of European civilisation.

As evening draws on, the total disregard of religious observance is, if possible, still more conspicuous. Never is the opera filled with such enthusiastic crowds as on Sunday evening ; never are the Theatres of the Port St Martin, the Boulevards, the Opera Comique, the Vaudeville and the Varietés, so full as on that occasion ; never are the balls beyond the barriers so crowded ; never is Tivoli so enliven-

ing, or the open air concerts in the Champs Elysées thronged by so many thousands. On Sunday evening in Paris there seems to be but one wish, one feeling, one desire,—and that is, to amuse themselves; and by incessantly labouring at that one object, they certainly succeed in it to an extent that could hardly be credited in colder and more austere latitudes.

The condition of the clergy over France is, generally speaking, depressed and indigent in the extreme. The Constituent Assembly, who decreed the annexation of the whole property of the Church to the State, and declared “that they intrusted the due maintenance of religion and the succour of the poor to the honour of the Great Nation,” redeemed their pledge, by giving most of the incumbents of the rural parishes from £48 to £60 a-year. Bishops have 6000 francs, or £240, yearly. The Archbishop of Paris alone has £600. In some of the town parishes, the incumbents, from subsequent endowments or adventitious sources, have from £200 to £300 per annum; but, generally speaking, their income, in the richest parishes, varies from £80 a-year to £120; in the poorest, it is only from £50 to £70. It may safely be affirmed, that the clergy of France, taken as a body, are poorer than the schoolmasters of England and Scotland.

The effect of all this is seen in the most striking manner in the appearance of the rural landscape of France. You generally, in the villages, see a parish church, the bequest to the nation of the pious care of their forefathers; but great numbers of these are in a ruinous or tottering condition. There is an evident want of any funds to keep them up. The most trifling repairs of a church, as everything else in France, must be executed by the Government; and the Ministers of Louis Philippe seem to think that this is one of the articles upon which economy can best be practised. But a parsonage-house, or any sort of separate residence for the curé, is never to be seen. He is, in general, boarded in the house of some farmer or small proprietor; and in habits, society, education, manners, and rank of life, is in no respect above the peasantry by whom he is surrounded.

It is not to be imagined from this, however, that the country clergy are either ignorant or inattentive to their

sacred duties ; on the contrary, they are most assiduous in discharging them, and are, in general, justly endeared to their flocks, not only by an irreproachable life, but by the most constant and winning attentions. It would be unjust to expect in them the high education, gentlemanlike manners, or enlightened views of the English clergy ; or the more discursive but useful information which is to be met with in the manses of the Presbyterian ministers in Scotland. We must not expect to see either Hebers, or Coplestones, or Bucklands, or Blairs, or Robertsons, or Thomsons, or Chalmers, in the modern church of France. The race of Bossuet and Fénelon, of Massillon and Bourdaloue, of Flechier and Saurin, of Pascal and Malebranche, is extinct. The church is cast down into an inferior class in society. No one would make his son an ecclesiastic, who could obtain for him a situation in a grocer's shop. But, in the present state of the country, it is perhaps as well that this is the case. The reformation of the corrupted higher orders in the towns, is out of the question ; and if a priesthood, drawn from their ranks, were to be established, it would speedily draw to itself such a load of infidel obloquy, as would lead to its destruction. But the poor and humble parish priests are overlooked and despised by the arrogant Liberals in possession of office and power ; and, like their predecessors in the apostolic ages, they are, unobserved, laying the foundation of a spirit destined, in a future age, to overturn the institutions of their haughty oppressors, and effect that real regeneration of society, which can be found only in the reformation of the morals and principles of its members.

The abject poverty of the rural clergy in most parts of France is a most painful object of contemplation to an English traveller. There is no sort of provision for them in sickness or old age ; and when they are compelled, by either of these causes, to divide their scanty income with a more robust assistant, their condition becomes truly pitiable. In most cathedral churches is to be seen a box, with the inscription "*Tronc pour les malheureux prêtres ;*" a few sous are thankfully received by the religious teachers of the Great Nation. One of these boxes is to be seen on the pillars of Notre Dame ; another under the gorgeous aisle of Rouen ; a third in the graceful choir of Amiens ; a fourth

disgraces the generation who pass under the splendid portals of Rheims, and a fifth, that which points with deserved pride to the matchless Tower of Chartres.

A superficial observer who should judge of the religious state of France from the appearance of its great towns, would be far wide of the truth. It is a total mistake to suppose that devotion is extinct, or in the process of extinction, among its country inhabitants. It is in the great towns that infidelity reigns triumphant; it is among the young, the active, and the profligate citizens of despotic Paris, that religion is the subject of ridicule. It is true this class are now in the exclusive possession of political power; it is true several hundred thousand of them are dispersed over the mighty net which envelops France in the meshes of the capital; it is true that they direct literature, and influence thought, and stamp its character upon the nation in the estimation of foreign states: still they are not in possession of the mighty lever which directs the feelings of the rural inhabitants. As long as 48,000 parish priests, overlooked from their poverty, despised from their obscurity, contemptible to this world from their limited information, are incessantly and assiduously employed in diffusing religious belief through the peasantry, the extirpation of Christianity in France is impossible. Its foundations are spreading the deeper, its influences becoming more paramount in the uncorrupted provinces, from the total neglect into which it has fallen with the influential classes in the capital. It is impossible to enter any parish church in any part of the provinces, without being sensible that a large and increasing portion of the peasantry are strongly and profoundly impressed with religious feelings. In this state of things, the eye of philanthropy, without pretending to the gift of prophecy, can perhaps discern the elements preparing which are destined in some future age to produce another Revolution; an insurrection of the provinces against the capital; a real regeneration of society, by the infusion of rural simplicity and virtue into urban corruption and degeneracy; a termination of the convulsions, which commenced by casting down religion, in the triumph of the faith which gathers strength from misfortune. But whether this is to be the final result, or whether, as is perhaps

more probable, the utter prostration of the internal liberties of the nation, through the consequences of the Revolution, is to lead to the loss of its external independence, and the regeneration of southern weakness by a race of northern conquerors ; one thing is certain, and may be confidently prophesied, that France will never know what real freedom is, till her institutions are founded on the basis of religion, and that with the triumph of the faith which her Liberals abhor, and have cast down, is indissolubly wound up the accomplishment of the objects which they profess to have at heart.

The MORALS of France are in the state which might be expected in a country which has broken asunder all the bonds of society, and despises all the precepts of religion. Pleasure and excitement are the general objects of idolatry ; money, as the key to them, the universal aim. This desire for wealth is perhaps more strongly felt in Paris, and forms the great passion of life more completely, than in any other capital in Europe, because there are more objects of desire presented to the entranced senses which cannot be gained in any other way ; and of the prevalence of this desire, the great extent of its gaming-houses affords ample proof. But money is not the object of desire to the Parisian as to the Dutchman or Englishman, from any abstract passion for accumulation, or any wish to transmit, by a life of economy, an ample patrimony to his children. It is for the sake of present and immediate gratification ; that he may go more frequently to the opera, or indulge more liberally in the pleasures of the Ginguette ; that his wife and daughters may be more gaily dressed on Sundays, and their Tivoli parties be more brilliant, that money is so passionately coveted. The efforts made by all classes to gain a livelihood, and the prodigious obstacles which competition throws in their way, are perhaps greater in Paris than in any other metropolis of Europe. "*Quærenda est pecunia primum, virtus post nummos,*" is the general maxim of life. But still there is little accumulation of capital, comparatively speaking, within its walls. As fast as money is made, it is spent ; either in the multifarious objects of desire which are everywhere presented to the

sight, or in the purchase of *rentes*, or Government annuities, which die with the holders. The proportion of annuitants in France is incomparably greater than in England ; and the destitution of families from the loss of their head, exists to a painful and unheard-of extent.

Pleasure and excitement are the universal objects ; the maxims of Epicurus the general observance. To enjoy the passing hour—to snatch from existence all the roses which it will afford, and disquiet themselves as little as possible about its thorns, is the grand principle of life. The state of Paris in this respect has been well described by a late enlightened and eloquent author—

“ Paris is no longer a city which belongs to any one nation or people ; it is in many respects the metropolis of the world ; the rendezvous of all the rich, all the voluptuous on the face of the earth. For them its artists, assembled from every quarter of Europe, imagine or invent every day fresh objects of excitement or desire ; for them they build theatres, and multiply indefinitely all the ephemeral novelties calculated to rouse the senses and stimulate expense. There everything may be purchased, and that too under the most alluring form. Gold is the only divinity which is worshipped in that kingdom of pleasure, and it is indifferent from what hand it flows. It is in that centre of enjoyment that all the business of France is done—that all its wealth is expended, and the fruit of its toil from one end of the kingdom to the other brought to the great central mart of pleasure. The proprietor wrings the last farthing out of his soil—the merchant, the notary, the advocate, flock there from all quarters to sell their capital, their revenue, their virtue, or their talents, for pleasure of every description, which a thousand artists portray in the most seducing colours to a nation famishing for enjoyment. And it is from that corrupted centre that we are told the regeneration of the state, the progress of independence and liberty, is to flow.”*

As pleasure and excitement are thus the universal objects, it may readily be conceived what facilities are afforded in the French metropolis for their gratification. The gaming-houses, accordingly, are innumerable ; and above a third of the children born within the barriers are bastards.* But those who look for excitation of that description, will not find in Paris anything approaching to the open and undisguised profligacy of London. There is nothing in its public places approaching to the saloons of Drury Lane, or the upper circles of Covent Garden ; the Strand and Regent Street at night are infested in a way unknown even in the Boulevards Italiens or the Rue de Richelieu. The two Revolutions have *organised licen-*

* GENERAL DONNADIEU, 270—271.

† DUPIN'S *Force Commerciale*, p. 40.

tiousness. Having become the great object of life, and, as it were, the staple commodity of the capital, it has fallen under the direction of the police. *Bienséance* and decorum are there the order of the day. The sirens of pleasure are confined to a few minor theatres, and particular quarters of the town. They abound in every street, almost in every house; but they can openly ply their vocation in appointed districts only. Even the Palais Royal, the cradle of both Revolutions, has been purged of the female anarchists who were their first supporters. This is certainly a very great improvement, well worthy of imitation on the British side of the Channel. Youth and timidity are not openly assailed as they are in English great towns; and though those who seek for dissipation will meet with it in abundance, it is not, willing or unwilling, thrust down their throats. It is possible, in the Quartier de l'Université and remoter parts of Paris, for young men to pursue their studies, infinitely more clear of temptation than either at the London University or King's College.

But while these advantages must be conceded to the organisation and arrangements of the French police on the one hand, it is not the less certain, on the other, that all these fair appearances are merely skin-deep, and that under this thin disguise is half concealed a mass of licentiousness probably unprecedented in any modern state. Certainly never, since the days of the Roman Emperors, was pleasure so unceasingly pursued by both sexes as it is now at Paris; or such efforts made to heighten natural desire by forced excitement, or talent and art so openly called in to lend their aid to the cause of licentiousness. Profligate books and prints exist everywhere; but in other capitals they must be sought after to be found, and where they are, their character and appearance show that they are meant for the brutal classes, or the higher orders in their moments of brutality, only. But in Paris the case is the reverse. The treasures of knowledge, the elegance of art, the fascination of genius, are daily and hourly employed in the cause of corruption; and of them may truly be said, what Mr Burke falsely affirmed of the old French manners, that "vice has lost half its deformity by having lost all its grossness." The delicacy and beauty of

these productions, as well as their amazing number, prove that they find a ready sale with the higher as well as the lower orders. They have discovered the truth of the old maxim, "*Ars est celare artem.*" Voluptuousness is more surely attained by being half disguised; and corruption spreads the more securely, from having cast aside everything calculated to disgust its unhardened votaries. The arts of lithography and printing go hand in hand in this refined and elegant system of demoralisation; the effusions of genius, the beauty of design, the richness of colouring, are employed together to throw an entrancing light over the scenes of profligacy, and the ordinary seductions of a great capital, heightened by all that taste or art can suggest to stimulate the passions—emblematic of the mixed good and evil which has resulted from these great inventions, and the prodigious force they have given to the solvents of vice in one age, as well as to the hardening principles of virtue in another.*

It is observed by Montesquieu, that honour, as the national principle, is more durable in its nature than either virtue or religion; and the present state of Paris, contrasted with the military character of the French, affords a strong confirmation of the observation. The incessant pursuit of pleasure by both sexes has, in every age, been the grand solvent which has melted away the principle of military virtue; and the reason is obvious, because those whose chief object is selfish gratification cannot endure the fatigues and the privations attendant on military exploits. There cannot be a doubt that this destroying principle is in full operation in the French capital; but though it has completely eaten through the safeguards of religion and virtue, it has hitherto left undecayed the passion for military distinction. The extraordinary strength which this principle has acquired in modern Europe in general, and France in particular, from the feudal institutions, and the great development which it received from the wars of the Revolution and the triumphs of Napoleon, have to all appearance withstood the enervating influence of a corrupt-

* Some of these productions are now generally to be seen in the towns of Britain; they first appeared during the frenzy of the Reform Bill. It is curious to observe, how invariably social disorganisation and private corruption go hand in hand.

ing ingredient which proved fatal to the courage of Greece and Rome. But it is not the less certain that it will ultimately sink before its influence. It is by not elevating our minds to the slow progress of all such great changes that we are at all misled on any occasion as to their progress, or the effect on public fortune of the principles of decay, which spring from the progress of private corruption. The alteration, like the decline of the day in autumn, is imperceptible from day to day; but it becomes quite apparent if we contrast one period or age of the world with another. Compare the age of Regulus or Scipio, with that of Constantine or Honorius; or that of the Lombard League with the present pusillanimity of the Italian people; and the prostration of national strength by the growth of private selfishness is obvious to the most careless observer. The French Revolution is not destined to form an exception to the general law: its fortunes will be ultimately destroyed by the effects of the poisoned source from which they sprung; the conquests of its authors will be lost by their inability to conquer themselves. Both Revolutions have begun in the Palais Royal, the very focus of corruption from every part of France; and through every stage of their progress, both have given unequivocal proofs of their impure origin. Let the friends of religion and virtue be of good cheer; no institutions founded on such a basis ever yet were durable. The French Revolution began in the haunts of profligacy, and they have spread in it the seeds of mortality which will bring it to the grave.

Next to sexual profligacy, gaming is *par excellence* the grand vice of Paris; and it, like every other principle of evil, has made rapid and fearful progress since the Three Days. No attempts whatever are made to restrain it; on the contrary, it is taken under the safeguard of the police, and a tax levied on its profits, as on those of prostitution, which constitutes a considerable part of the municipal revenue. The prodigious number of suicides which occur in Paris, amounting to, at least, above one a-night, frequently to a great deal more, chiefly springs from the despair produced by the inordinate passion for this vice. Unlike what generally occurs in England, it exists equally

among the poorest as the richest classes; the hells are open for the sous of the labourer or the francs of the artisan, as well as for the napoleon of the officer or the rouleaux of the banker. They are to be met with in every street; they spread their devastating influence through every workshop and manufactory in Paris. This perilous vice, like that of sexual profligacy, is the natural result of a successful Revolution; of the demolition of all restraint on the passions which has arisen from silencing the voice of religion, and the bounty offered to instant excitement, by the uncertainty in regard to the future which the destruction of all the institutions of society inevitably produces.

In one particular, however, the French capital offers a pleasing contrast to every considerable town in the British isles. Drunkenness, though considerably more prevalent than formerly, does not exist in France to an extent at all comparable to what it does in England; and hence the manners of the lower orders, notwithstanding all the anarchy of the Revolution, are not half so coarse and brutal as in our great manufacturing towns. In truth, the extraordinary progress of this frightful vice in Great Britain, since the reduction of the duty on spirits and the abolition of the beer tax,* is one of the most woful circumstances in our social condition, and one which, if not rapidly checked by a proper set of fiscal regulations, promises soon to plunge our labouring classes into a state of depravity unparalleled in any Christian state. Drunkenness, if seen in public at Paris, is at once punished by the police; and the prodigious number of civil and military employés who are to be met with in every street at night renders it impossible for the inebriated to indulge in those disgraceful brawls which then disgrace every English city. The abstinence from this vice depends chiefly on constitutional causes, the warmth of the climate, which renders the excitement of intoxication not so desirable as in northern latitudes; but much is to be ascribed also to the happy custom of levying a heavy duty (a franc a bottle) on wine imported into the metropolis—a burden which banishes intoxication in a great degree to the outside

* Nothing ever gave us more pleasure than to observe, from a late Parliamentary return, that, since the slight addition to the duty on spirits in 1830, the manufacture of the fiery poison has declined in Scotland 1,300,000 gallons yearly.

of the barriers, and confines it to the days when a walk to those remote stations can be undertaken by the working classes. Would that a similar burden existed on all spirits imported into the cities of Great Britain !

The state of LITERATURE, especially those lighter branches of it which exhibit the faithful picture of the public feeling and ideas, is equally instructive since the Three Days. It is difficult to convey to an English reader, unacquainted with the modern French novels, any adequate idea of the extraordinary mixture which they exhibit ; and they present, perhaps, the most convincing proof which the history of fiction affords, of the indispensable necessity of fixed principles in religion and virtue to restrain the otherwise inordinate flight of the human imagination.

It was long the fashion with the apologists of the Revolution to assert, that public morals had improved during its progress ; that the license and profligacy of the days of Louis XV. and the Regent Orleans would no longer be tolerated ; and that, with the commencement of higher duties and the growth of severer principles, the licentiousness which had so long disgraced the French literature had for ever disappeared. The present state of French novels may show whether a successful Revolution, and the annihilation of all the fetters of religion, is the way to regenerate such a corrupted mass. Having lost nothing of former profligacy, having abated nothing of former infidelity, they have been tinged by the fierce passions and woful catastrophes which arose during the first Revolution. Romance has now become blended with sensuality ; German extravagance with French licentiousness ; the demons of the air with the corruptions of the world. The modern French novels are not one whit less profligate than those of Louis XV. ; but they are infinitely more extravagant, wild, and revolting. To persons whose minds have as yet been only partially shaken by the terrible catastrophes of a Revolution, it is hardly conceivable how such extravagant fictions should ever have entered the human imagination. They are poured forth, however, with unbounded profusion by their modern novelists, and passionately read by a generation whose avidity for strong emotions and vivid excitement, whether from

terror, astonishment, despair, or licentiousness, seems to know no bounds.

The limits of an Essay such as this, embracing such a variety of objects, though few more important, forbid us from attempting what we intended, and possibly may hereafter resume—an analysis of some of these extravagant and detestable, though often able and powerful publications. Suffice it to say, that the basis of almost the whole of them is adultery, or other guilty and extravagant sensual passion; and they generally terminate in suicide, or some such horrid catastrophe. On details of this description they dwell with minute and often coarse avidity; but it is by no means with such passions that they are solely filled; they have also borrowed largely from German fiction and extravagance, from Catholic legends and superstition, from feudal manners and oppression, from chivalrous adventure and exploits. They form what may be styled the *Romantic Licentious School* of Fiction. Murders and robberies, rapes and conflagrations, the guillotine and the scaffold, demons and guardian angels, confessors and confidants, Satan and St Michael, ghosts, wizards, incest, sensuality, parricides, suicides, and every kind of extravagance, are thrown together in wild confusion. But the general result is ruinous to every species of regular or virtuous conduct, and may be considered as affording a specimen of the frame of mind in which the victims who are shortly after stretched out on the Morgue, rush from the gambling-houses in the Palais Royal, to drown the chaos of contending passions in the waters of the Seine.*

The dramatic pieces which have sprung up since the Three Glorious Days afford the same extraordinary picture of the confusion of ideas, feelings, and emotions, in which the French youth are involved since they pushed out to a stormy sea without either compass or rudder. They almost all turn upon adultery, incest, or some such elegant and chastened depravity; but of the chaos of extravagance, fiction, allegory, vice, and horror, which they present, it is

* So monstrous have these extravagances become, that they have excited the attention even of the steadiest apologists of the French Revolution; and the *Edinburgh Review*, in a recent Number, has borne the candid testimony of an unwilling witness to the demoralising effects of their favourite political principles. See "The Late French Novelists," in No. 116 of the *Edinburgh Review*.

impossible to convey any idea. Some of them, particularly "La Reine d'Espagne," have been hissed from the stage, as too bad even for a Parisian audience. From others, as "La Tentation," the most obnoxious scenes, in one of which a rape was represented almost before the eyes of the spectators, have been dropped out. But still they are in general so extravagant, indelicate, and licentious, that it is impossible to speak of them in terms of sufficient reprobation ; and the most respectable writers of France, of the Liberal school, regard them with a degree of horror even surpassing that which they excite in the mind of an English spectator. "If its literature," says Salvandy, "is to be regarded as the expression of national character, not a hope remains for France. It is stained with every species of corruption ; its fundamental principle is to attack every sentiment and interest of which the social order is composed. You would suppose that it was resolutely bent on restoring to France all the vices which it had imbibed at the close of the last century. A sort of dogmatic cynicism has invaded all its departments. If, on the strength of a name of celebrity, or the daily eulogies of the press, you venture to a theatre, you see represented scenes where the dignity of the one sex is as much outraged as the modesty of the other. Everywhere the same sort of spectacles await you. There is a class which they keep as yet behind the curtain, contenting themselves with announcing atrocities which the public are not yet prepared to bear. Romance has already given the example of this depraved species of composition. The muse now makes use of obscenities, as formerly it did of passion. What is to follow when tragedy and romance have exhausted their brief career, God only knows. When they have ceased to illuminate these hideous orgies, the lights of literature will be extinguished."*

To give some idea of these extraordinary productions which now are represented with such prodigious success at the Parisian theatres, we shall give an abstract of two of the most unexceptionable, and, at the same time, the most popular pieces which have appeared at the opera since the Revolution of July—"La Tentation," and "Robert le Diable." We have selected the most delicate which fell

* SALVANDY, *Seize Mois des Révolutionnaires*, 408.

under our observation ; the pieces represented at the minor theatres could not be borne even in the decent guise of an English description.

The first of these, which in splendour of decoration exceeds anything yet represented even in the most splendid of European theatres, turns upon the well-known legend of the Temptation of St Anthony ; but it is so altered and varied to admit their varied and extravagant corruptions, that it is hardly possible to recognise in it the simple tale which has been so often immortalised by the pencil of Teniers.

The piece opens with the Saint reposing on his pallet at the gate of a solitary chapel, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and crowds of pilgrims of both sexes arrive at the shrine to offer up their vows ; after which they join in festive amusements, and the *danseuses*, arrayed as peasant girls, dance round the Anchorite with such graceful motions, that he is tempted to indulge in a little waltz with the fairest of these daughters of Eve. Shortly after, when they have retired, a young woman of extraordinary beauty comes along to the shrine. Dazzled by her charms, and encouraged by the opportunity which the solitude of the situation afforded, he forms the design of seduction, and is endeavouring to carry his intentions into effect, when she flies to the chapel of the Virgin, and shrieking, implores her powerful aid to ward off impending destruction. Instantly the powers of Heaven and Hell appear. Astaroth and his legions of devils, in a thousand frightful forms, rise from the earth, and strive to obtain the mastery of the falling Saint and endangered virgin ; while, high in the clouds above, the angels of heaven appear to throw their shield over suppliant innocence. At length a truce is formed between the contending powers ; the condition of which is, that the Saint is to be surrendered to the powers of darkness, to be by them subjected to all the temptations which can endanger human virtue, and if he falls under any one, he is to be abandoned soul and body to their dominion ; but if he proves victorious, he is to be borne aloft to the regions of light. The decorations of this scene are of the most exquisite description ; the angels in the clouds are placed in the attitudes portrayed in Raphael's and Correggio's celestial choirs in the St Cecilia at Bologna.

and the St Jerome at Parma ; and a mellow light is thrown over the heavenly group in so ravishing a manner, as to produce an indelible impression on the mind of the spectator.

The next act opens with the convocation of the powers of darkness in the infernal regions, to consider the measures they should adopt, and review the force they could command in the great undertaking in which they are engaged. This leads to a grand review of the powers of Hell, in which the whole strength of the opera and the whole fancy of the artist are put forth. The legions of devils, arrayed in every possible garb of extravagance, descend an immense stair, ascending to the top of the theatre, on the left hand, and march before Astaroth in such numbers, that it is no exaggeration to say that three or four hundred persons, splendidly dressed, are on the stage at the same time. Yet even here French conceit is curiously manifested, and these legions of the infernal spirits, in naked or savage attire, are preceded by regular *pioneers*, with their shaggy beards, and axes on their shoulders, precisely as in the reviews of the Palace Carousels ! When the review is concluded, the infernal conclave, distrustful of their success by open force, resolve to carry on the war by more insinuating means ; and it is determined to tempt the Saint by means of a young woman of their own creation, gifted with every beauty and charm which can entrance the senses, all which are to be employed to seduce his virtue. A caldron appears, the devils in succession throw in some attractive or malignant ingredient, and shortly the Siren steps forth, and comes forward to give token of her attractive powers, by dancing and waltzing before the spectators. At the first representation, she arose from the caldron and danced in a flesh-coloured silk dress, tight to the shape, meant to represent absolute nudity ; but she is now arrayed in a slight muslin robe, which throws a thin veil of decency over her beautiful form.

In the third act the Saint is subjected to the double trial of famine and the Siren. The scene is transported to the gate of a Palace in a desolate country, created by the devils for the purposes of their temptation ; near the gate of which a crucifix appears, rising out of the drifting snow. St Anthony approaches, and falls down in supplication at the

foot of the cross ; his strength is exhausted ; his limbs fail ; his wallet does not contain a single crust of bread. Astaroth appears, followed by the Siren whom he has created, at the gate of the castle ; tutored by him, she descends, approaches the Saint, and employs all her art to subjugate his resolution. She offers to bring him food in abundance from the palace, to spread a couch of down for his wearied limbs, to clothe in rich garments his shivering frame, to abandon herself to him, if he will surrender the crucifix which hangs round his neck, and abjure his faith ; but the resolution of St Anthony is immovable. While he lies shivering and starving at the foot of the cross, a sumptuous feast is prepared before his eyes by the cooks in the palace ; the savoury flavour comes over his fainting senses ; he sees it carried up to the banquet hall, where Astaroth and his devils are feasting and rioting in luxurious plenty, and crawls to the gate to implore a crust of bread to assuage the intolerable pangs of hunger ; but is sternly refused, unless he will consent to part with the cross, in which case he is offered the most luxurious fare. He still remains firm to his faith, and while drenched by showers of snow, and starving of hunger, hears the wild and frantic revelry which proceeds round the well-covered boards, from the brilliantly lighted rooms of the palace. Struck with such heroic resolution, the Siren is melted. She is awakened by the efforts of the Virgin to a sense of virtue ; she secretly supplies him with provisions from the infernal abode ; and the Daughter of Perdition is won over to the league of Heaven by an act of charity. Instantly the black spot on her breast, the mark of reprobation, disappears, and her bosom regains its snowy whiteness. Astaroth and the infernal legion issue forth, frantic with rage at the failure of their design ; they cast out their unworthy creation ; the palace, with all its treasures, is consigned to the flames, into which they plunge, leaving the Saint and his lovely convert alone in the wilderness of snow.

Baffled in his design, Astaroth and his league next assail the Anchorite in a different way. The scene changes in the next act to the interior of a magnificent Harem, where the Saint and the converted maiden are surrounded by all the pomp of Eastern luxury. The sultanas and ladies of the

Seraglio are seated round the walls, and the whole strength of the opera is again called forth in the entrancing dances which are there employed to captivate the senses. Astaroth causes Miranda, the maiden of his creation, to dance before the Sultan ; captivated by her beauty, he throws her the handkerchief ; while at the same time Astaroth endeavours to persuade the Saint to murder the Sultan, on the specious pretence of setting free the numerous slaves of his passion. Miranda seizes the dagger, exclaiming that she alone should perpetrate the deed of blood ; the Sultan is alarmed ; the guards surround the hermit and the maid, who throw themselves from the windows of the Seraglio into the sea, while the demons are swallowed up in a gulf of fire.

In the opening of the last act, the Anchorite is seen reposing on the grass with the maiden beside him ; the demons surround him during his sleep, but cannot pass the holy circle which guards the innocent. When he awakens, he finds himself enveloped on either side by legions of devils in every frightful form, and a circle of Sirens who dance round him with the most voluptuous movements. Meanwhile Astaroth has seized Miranda, and “ *l’a rendue victime de sa brutalité et l’a frappé ;*” * the Anchorite is on the point of yielding to the seductions of the Sirens who surround him, when Miranda, extricated from the arms of Astaroth, rushes forward and throws the beads and cross she had removed from him over his neck. His reason is restored, he regains the dominion over his passion. Astaroth plunges his dagger in the breast of Miranda in despair at the total failure of his prospects. St Michael and the angels descend from Heaven ; a desperate conflict ensues between the powers of light and darkness, in the close of which Astaroth and his demons are overthrown, and the Saint and Miranda are borne aloft through the clouds into the bosom of the heavenly host.

“ Robert le Diable ” is founded on a different series of adventures, but the same contest of the powers of this world with those of hell. The first act opens on the shore of the harbour of Palermo, where Norman knights, under the shade of acacia trees, celebrate their mistresses, their wines, their

* This, though still in the programme of the piece, was found to be revolting, and is now omitted.

games. Robert and his friend Bertram are seated together, when a minstrel arrives, leading a beauteous maid, his affianced bride. Robert asks him for news ; he recounts the story of Robert le Diable, who was the son of Bertha, a noble maid of Normandy, who had yielded to the seduction of a demon, in the form of a handsome stranger. Unknowingly he is reciting the tale to Robert himself, who, in a transport of rage at the narrative, is on the point of plunging his dagger in his bosom ; when he is restrained by his friend Bertram, who prevails on him to respite the minstrel for an hour. Meanwhile he promises the handsome *fiancée* to his chevaliers ; but when she is introduced to be surrendered to their desires, he discovers in the maid, Alice, his beauteous foster-sister, the bearer of the testament of his mother, who on her deathbed had besought her to convey her last instructions to her beloved son. Robert, in return, recounts to Alice his love for the fair Princess Isabella of Sicily, whom he was on the point of carrying off from her parents, when he was assailed by the Knights of Sicily, and only rescued by his friend Bertram. At this juncture, Bertram approaches ; Alice involuntarily shudders at his sight, from the resemblance which he bears to the paintings of Satan combating St Michael, but, having recovered from her alarm, undertakes to convey a letter from Robert to the Princess Isabella.

The next acts opens with the Princess in the interior of the Palace of Palermo, bewailing the loss of the faithful Robert, and her unhappy fate, in being compelled to wed the Prince of Grenada, contrary to her inclinations. Young maidens, the bearers of petitions, are introduced, among whom is Alice, who insinuates into her hand the letter of Robert. She consents to see him. He is introduced, and clothed by her attendants with a splendid suit of armour to enter the lists against the Prince in a tournament, where her hand was to be the prize of the victor. A herald appears and, in the name of the Prince, defies Robert, who eagerly accepts the challenge. Bertram, who is Satan in disguise, and had clothed another demon with the form of the Prince of Grenada, smiles at the success of his projects, to win over the soul of Robert to perdition. The tournament takes place ; Isabella, by her father's orders, puts on

his armour on the Prince of Grenada, but when the trumpets sound, she looks in vain for his beloved antagonist. Robert, restrained by the powers of hell, cannot appear. He is for ever disgraced ; Bertram beholds his schemes rapidly approaching their maturity.

In the third act, Bertram, pale and agitated, emerges from a cavern, the council-hall of the infernal powers. He is tormented with anxious thoughts, for he has learned the decree of Fate, that his power over Robert terminates if he is not devoted to the powers of hell before twelve o'clock that night. There is not a moment to lose. He casts his eyes on Alice, who had come to that solitude to meet her betrothed minstrel ; the demon is seized with passion, and strives to seduce her, but is repulsed with horror. She hears, however, the choir of hell in the cavern invoking the name of Robert, and perceives that Bertram is Satan in disguise. By the threat of instant death, he compels her to promise secrecy. At this juncture Robert enters, overwhelmed with horror at his involuntary failure to appear at the tournament : Alice in vain approaches to warn him of his danger ; bound by her vow of secrecy, she is compelled to retire, leaving Robert alone to his satanic confidant. Bertram then informs him that his rival, the Prince of Grenada, had availed himself of the aid of the infernal powers ; and that he never could overcome him till he had taken from the tomb of St Rosalie, in a neighbouring ruin, a green branch, the charmed wand which would render the lover of Isabella all-powerful. Misled by the perfidious advice, Robert enters the cavern which he is told leads to the tomb, and immediately a scene of matchless beauty succeeds.

The theatre represents a ruined monastery, through the lofty desolate arches of which the moon throws an uncertain light. Many old tombs are scattered about on the broken pavement, on the top of which the marble figures of ancient worthies are seen. In the midst of them is the sepulchre of St Rosalie, with a branch of cypress in the hand of her marble effigy. Bertram arrives : he conjures up the shades of all the nuns who had been interred in the abbey, condemned "*en punition d'une vie trop profane*," to rise to aid in seducing Robert into the accomplishment of his promise.

Instantly the spirits rise out of their narrow beds ; the marble figures which reclined on the monumental slabs, step forth from every part of the pavement ; a hundred nuns appear dressed in their robes of white, and, slowly moving forward through the gloom, surround the bewildered knight. Gradually they seem to be reanimated by the breath and the passions of life ; they join in dances at first slow and mystical, which insensibly warm into grace and voluptuousness. They exert all their attractions to induce Robert to advance and seize the fated branch. Seduced by so many charms, he approaches the sepulchre, but starts back on seeing in the marble image of the saint a resemblance to his mother ; the nuns, in encircling bands, renew their efforts to entrance his senses ; he yields at length, and seizes the branch. Instantly the spell is broken ; the spectres sink into their graves ; the figures, late so beauteous and animated, freeze again into lifeless marble ; and the knight remains alone with the branch, while the sacred walls resound with the wild yells of the demons at the completion of their victory.

In the fourth act, Isabella, surrounded by her maidens, is represented at her toilet, distributing her marriage gifts to six young women who were to be married at the same time that she espoused the Prince of Grenada. Robert appears with the green branch ; its magical powers overwhelm all her attendants with lethargic slumbers ; the knight approaches, and makes himself known to the Princess. In the midst of her transports, she learns by what means he had obtained the green bough, and conjures him to cast away the infernal wand. Overcome by love and remorse, he breaks the branch ; the attendants instantly awaken ; astonished at the appearance of their lady in the arms of a stranger knight, they call in the men-at-arms ; Robert is seized, and Isabella swoons away.

In the last act, Robert and Bertram appear in the vestibule of the Cathedral of Palermo ; the knight recounts that he had fought the Prince of Grenada, and had been vanquished by him. Bertram assures him that this fatality is owing to his fatal imprudence in breaking the branch, and that his only hope of success is to be found in subscribing an instant compact with the powers of darkness. At the moment when he is about to comply, strains of religious music are heard

from the choir, which thrill through the heart of the wavering knight, and recall him to purer sentiments. In despair at his failure, Bertram reveals his name and character ; he is Robert's father, the demon who had seduced his mother ; and he informs him that, unless he signs the irrevocable deed before twelve o'clock, he loses him for ever ; if he does, he forthwith becomes the husband of Isabella. Robert exclaims, "*L'arrêt est prononcé, l'Enfer est le plus fort,*" and is just going to sign, when Alice, his foster-sister, rushes in, places in his hand the Testament of his mother, in which she conjures him to shun the demon who had ruined her. He is again shaken. A desperate struggle ensues between Alice and Bertram, heaven and hell, in which Robert is about to yield, when twelve strikes. Bertram, with a frightful yell, descends into a gulf of fire ; the veil of the sanctuary is withdrawn, Isabella appears in the choir, where she receives the now disenthralled Robert, while an aërial choir celebrates the triumph of the Most High.

There is one circumstance very remarkable in these theatrical pieces, which have had so prodigious a run at the Opera that each of them has been represented above a hundred times. Though they originate in the most licentious capital, and are exhibited to the most corrupted audience in Europe, yet they both terminate in the triumph of virtue over vice—of resolution over temptation—of the graces of heaven over the powers of hell. This, in such circumstances, is very remarkable. The excitements to the senses in both are innumerable ; the situations and incidents such as never could have been figured but in a licentious capital ; but still the final result is the triumph of virtue, and the impression made upon the spectator on the whole decidedly favourable to its cause. Hypocrisy, says Rochefoucault, is the homage which vice pays to virtue : it would appear that the sentiments of devotion, and the admiration of integrity, are so strongly implanted in the human mind, that many ages of corruption must elapse before they can be wholly extirpated. The French have still so much of both lingering in their imaginations and their associations at least, if not in their conduct, that the open disregard of them cannot be as yet tolerated in the higher theatres. Centuries of degradation, however, similar to that in which, from the result of the

Revolution, they are now placed, will work out this melancholy change, even in the country of Fénelon and Bossuet. The modern Italian drama frequently represents the hero of the piece suffering under the agonies of fear; and poltroonery is tolerated on the stage by the descendants of the Romans and Samnites.

Another circumstance which is well worthy of observation in the romantic licentious literature and drama of France, is the frequent use which is made of the imagery, the language, and the characters of the Catholic religion. Even the Romish Calendar, and the legends of the saints, are diligently ransacked to furnish stories and situations calculated to satisfy the avidity of the Parisian public for strong emotions. It would appear that the Parisians are now placed at that distance from religious belief, when they can derive pleasure from the lingering recollections which it awakens, without being shocked by the profanity to which it is exposed. They look upon religious impressions and the Catholic traditions as the English regard the fairy tales which amused their childhood, and derive a transient stimulus from their being brought back to their recollection as we do from seeing Bluebeard or Cinderella on the stage. Religion is as frequently the engine for moving the imagination now, as classical allusions were in the last age. The French are in that stage of corruption when they class religious imagery, and the early traditions of Scripture, with the Gothic superstition of the middle ages—with drawbridges, knights, giants, and chivalry—and are delighted with their representation, as we are with the feudal pictures and ancient imagery of Sir Walter Scott. The frequent introduction of religious characters and traditions in the modern works of imagination in France, affords decisive evidence that they have passed from the region of belief into that of imagination; from subduing the passions, or influencing the conduct, to thrilling the imagination and captivating the fancy. A people who entertained a sincere and practical regard for religion of any sort, never could bear to see its incidents and characters blended with hobgoblins and demons—with the spectres of the feudal, or the mythology of the classic ages.

This extraordinary change in the lighter branches of French literature is almost entirely the result of the Three

Glorious Days. The romantic school of fiction, indeed, had been steadily growing up under the Restoration; and accordingly, the dramatised tales of Sir Walter Scott had banished in all but the Theatre Français the works of Racine and Corneille from the stage. But it was not till the triumph of the Barricades had cast down the barriers of authority and influence, and let in a flood of licentiousness upon all the regions of thought, that the present intermixture of extravagance and sensuality took place. Still this grievous and demoralising effect is not to be ascribed solely or chiefly to that event, important as it has been in scattering far and wide the seeds of evil. It is not by a mere prætorian tumult in the capital that a nation is demoralised: Rome had twenty such urban and military revolutions as that which overthrew Charles X., without experiencing any material addition to the deep-rooted sources of imperial corruption. It was the first Revolution, with its frightful atrocities and crying sins, which produced this fatal effect; the second merely drew aside the feeble barrier which the Government of the Restoration had opposed to its devastation. In the present monstrous and unprecedented state of French literature is to be seen the faithful mirror of the state of the public mind produced by that convulsion; of that chaos of thoughts and passions and recollections, which has resulted from a successful insurrection not only against the Government, but against the institutions and the belief of former times; of the extravagance and frenzy of the human mind, when turned adrift, without either principle or authority to direct it, into the stormy sea of passion and pleasure.

The graver and more weighty works which were appearing in such numbers under the Restoration, have all ceased with the victory of the populace. The resplendent genius of Chateaubriand no longer throws its lustre over the declining virtue of the age; the learning and philosophy of Guizot is turned aside from the calm speculations of history to the turbulent sea of politics. Thierry has ceased to diffuse over the early ages of feudal times the discriminating light of sagacious inquiry: the pen of Barante conveys no longer, in clear and vivid colours, the manners of the fourteenth to the nineteenth century; Thiers, transformed into an ambitious politician, strives in vain, in his measures as a

Minister, to counteract the influence of his writings as an historian ; the fervent spirit of Beranger is stilled ; the poetic glow of Lamartine is quenched ; the pictured page of Salvandy is employed only in portraying the deplorable state of social and moral disorganisation consequent on the triumph of the Barricades. Instead of these illustrious men has sprung up a host of minor writers, who pander to the depraved taste of a corrupted age ; the race of Dumas, and Victor Hugos, and Janins—men who reflect like the cameleon the colours of the objects by which they are surrounded, and earn, like the opera-dancer, a discreditable livelihood, by exciting the passions or ministering to the pleasures of a depraved and licentious metropolis.

Thus, on all sides, and in every department of government, religion, morals, and literature, is the debasing and pernicious influence of the Revolution manifesting itself. The thin veil which concealed the progress of corruption during the Restoration, is torn aside ; government is settling down into despotism, religion into infidelity, morals into licentiousness, literature into depraved extravagance. What is to be the final issue of these melancholy changes, it is impossible confidently to predict ; but of this we may be well assured, that it is not till the fountains of wickedness are closed by the seal of religion, and the stream of thought is purified by suffering, that the disastrous consequences of two successful convulsions can be arrested, or freedom established on a secure basis, or public felicity based on a durable foundation.

THE AFFGHANISTAN EXPEDITION

[BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, FEB. 1840]

"IN the light of precaution," says Gibbon, "all conquest must be ineffectual unless it could be universal ; for, if successful, it only involves the belligerent power in additional difficulties and a wider sphere of hostility." All ages have demonstrated the truth of this profound observation. The Romans conquered the neighbouring states of Italy and Gaul, only to be brought into collision with the fiercer and more formidable nations of Germany and Parthia. Alexander overran Media and Persia, only to see his armies rolled back before the arms of the Scythians or the innumerable legions of India ; and the empire of Napoleon, victorious over the states of Germany and Italy, recoiled at length before the aroused indignation of the Northern powers. The British empire in India, the most extraordinary work of conquest which modern times have exhibited, forms no exception to the truth of this general principle. The storming of Seringapatam, and the overthrow of the House of Tippoo, only exposed us to the incursions of the Mahratta horse. The subjugation of the Mahrattas involved us in a desperate and doubtful conflict with the power of Holkar. After his subjugation, we came in contact with the independent and brave mountaineers of Nepaul ; and even their submission, and the establishment of the British frontier on the summit of the Himalayan snows, has not given that security to our Eastern possessions for which its rulers have so long and strenuously contended ; and beyond the stream of the Indus, even to the skirts of the Hindoo Koosh, it has been deemed necessary to establish the terror of the British arms, and the influence of the British name.

That such an incursion into Central Asia has vastly extended the sphere both of our diplomatic and hostile relations ; that it has brought us in contact with the fierce and barbarous northern tribes, and erected our outposts almost within sight of the Russian videttes, is no impeachment whatever of the wisdom and expediency of the measure, if it has been conducted with due regard to prudence and the rules of art in its execution. It is the destiny of all conquering powers to be exposed to this necessity of advancing in their course. Napoleon constantly said, and he said with justice, that he was not to blame for the conquests he undertook ; that he was forced on by invincible necessity ; that he was the head merely of a military republic, to which exertion was existence ; and that the first pause in his advance was the commencement of his fall. No one can study the eventful history of his times, without being satisfied of the justice of these observations. The British empire in the East is not, indeed, like his in Europe, one based on injustice and supported by pillage. Protection and improvement, not spoliation and misery, have followed in the rear of the English flag ; and the sable multitudes of Hindostan now permanently enjoy that protection and security which heretofore they had only tasted under the transient reigns of Baber and Aurungzebe. But still, notwithstanding all its experienced benefits, the British rule in Hindostan is essentially that of opinion ; it is the working and middle classes who are benefited by its sway. The interests and passions of too many of the rajahs and nobility are injured by its continuance, to render it a matter of doubt that a large and formidable body of malcontents is to be found within the bosom of the Company's territories, who would take advantage of the first external disaster to raise again the long-forgotten standard of independence ; and that, equally with the empire of Napoleon in Europe, our first movement of serious retreat would be the commencement of our fall. Nor would soldiers be wanting to aid the dispossessed nobles in the recovery of their pernicious authority. Whoever raises the standard of even *probable* warfare, is sure of followers in India ; the war castes throughout Hindostan, the Rajpoots and Mahometans of the northern provinces, are panting for the signal of hostilities, and the moment the standard of

native independence is raised, thousands of horse would cluster around it, ardent to carry the spear and the torch into peaceful villages, and renew the glorious days of Mahratta pillage and conflagration.

But it is not only within our natural frontier of the Indus and the Himalaya that the necessity of continually advancing, if we would exist in safety, is felt in the British empire in the East. The same necessity is imposed upon it by its external relations with foreign powers. It is too powerful to be disregarded in the balance of Asiatic politics ; its fame has extended far into the regions of China and Tartary ; its name must be respected or despised on the banks of the Oxus and the shores of the Araxes. The various powers which lie between the British and Russian frontiers cannot remain neutral ; they must be influenced by the one or the other power. "As little," said Alexander the Great, "as the heavens can admit of two suns, can the earth admit of two rulers of the East."

Strongly as all nations, in all ages, have been impressed with military success as the mainspring of diplomatic advances, there is no part of the world in which it is so essential to political influence as in the East. Less informed than those of Europe in regard to the real strength of their opponents, and far less prospective in their principles of policy, the nations of Asia are almost entirely governed by present success in their diplomatic conduct. Remote or contingent danger produces little impression upon them ; present peril only is looked at. They never negotiate till the dagger is at their throat ; but when it is there, they speedily acquiesce in whatever is exacted of them. Regarding the success of their opponents as the indication of the will of destiny, they bow, not only with submission, but with cheerfulness to it. All our diplomatic advances in the East, accordingly, have followed in the train of military advantages ; all our failures have been consequent on the neglect to assert with due spirit the rights and dignity of the British empire. The celebrated Roman maxim, *parcere subjectis et debellare superbos*, is not there a principle of policy ; it is a rule of necessity. It is the condition of existence to every powerful state.

The court of Persia is in an especial manner subject to

the influence of these external considerations. Weakened by long-continued and apparently interminable domestic feuds ; scarcely capable of mustering round the standards of Cyrus and Darius twenty thousand soldiers ; destitute alike of wealth, military organisation, or central power, the Kings of Teheran are yet obliged to maintain a doubtful existence in the midst of neighbouring and powerful states. The Ottoman empire has long pressed from the west upon them, and transmitted, since the era when the religion of Mahomet was in its cradle, the indelible hatred of the successors of Othman against the followers of Ali. In later times, and since the Cross has become triumphant over the Crescent, the Russian empire has pressed upon them with ceaseless ambition from the north. More permanently formidable than the standards of either Timour or Gengis Khan, her disciplined battalions have crossed the Caucasus, spread over the descending hills of Georgia, and brought the armies of Christ to the foot of Mount Ararat and the shores of the Araxes. Even the south has not been free from ominous signs and heart-stirring events ; the fame of the British arms, the justice of the British rule, have spread far into the regions of Central Asia ; the storming of Seringapatam, the fall of Scindiah, the conquest of Holkar, have resounded among the mountains of Affghanistan, and awakened in the breasts of the Persians the pleasing hope, that from those distant regions the arms of the avenger are destined to come ; and that, amidst the contentions of England and Russia, Persia may again emerge to her ancient supremacy among the nations of the earth.

The existence of Persia is so obviously threatened by the aggressions of Russia, the peril in that quarter is so instant and apparent, that the Persian Government have never failed to take advantage of every successive impulse communicated to British influence, by our Indian Government's victories in Hindostan, to strengthen the alliance and draw closer the relations with this country. The storming of Seringapatam was immediately followed by a defensive treaty between Persia and Great Britain, in 1800, by which it was stipulated, that the English merchant should be placed on the footing of the most favoured nation, and that no hostile European force should be permitted to pass through the Persian territories

towards Hindostan. Every successive addition made to our Indian empire, every triumph of our Indian arms, drew closer the relations between Great Britain and the court of Teheran ; and it was not till the wretched days of economy and retrenchment began, till the honour of England was forgotten in the subservience to popular clamour, and her ultimate interests were overlooked in the thirst for immediate popularity, that any decay in our influence with the court of Persia was perceptible. In those disastrous days, however, when the strong foundations of the British empire were loosened, in obedience to the loud democratic clamour for retrenchment, the advantages we had gained in Central Asia were entirely thrown away. With an infatuation which now appears almost incredible, but which was then lauded by the whole Liberal party as the very height of economic wisdom, we destroyed our navy at Bombay, thereby surrendering the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf to any hostile power that chose to occupy them ; we reduced our Indian army from two hundred and eighty to one hundred and sixty thousand men, thereby exposing ourselves to the contempt of the native powers, by whom respect is never paid but to strength, and weakening the attachment of the native population, who found themselves in great part shut out from the dazzling career of British conquest ; and we suffered Persia to combat, single-handed, the dreadful power of Russia in 1827, and never sent either a guinea or a bayonet to save the barrier of Hindostan from Muscovite dismemberment. These disgraceful deeds took place during the halcyon days of Liberal administration ; when the Tories nominally held the reins, but the Whigs really possessed the power of government ; when that infallible criterion of right and wrong, popular opinion, was implicitly obeyed ; when the democratic cry for retrenchment pervaded, penetrated, and paralysed every department of the state ; and when, amidst the mutual and loud compliments of the Ministerial and Opposition benches, the foundations of the British empire were loosened, and the strength of the British arms withered in the hands of conceding Administrations. The consequences might easily have been foreseen. Province after province was reft by the Muscovite invaders from the Persian empire ; fortress after fortress yielded to the terrible

powers of their artillery ; the torrent of the Araxes was bestrode by their battalions ; the bastions of Erivan yielded to their cannon ; and Persia avoided total conquest only by yielding up its whole northern barrier and most warlike provinces to the power of Russia. It is immaterial to us whether these consequences took place under the nominal rule of Lord Liverpool, Mr Canning, or the Duke of Wellington ; suffice it to say, they all took place under the influence of the Liberals ; and that the principles on which they were founded were those which had been advocated for half a century by the whole Whig party, and which were then, as they still are, praised and lauded to the skies by the whole Liberal leaders of every denomination.

The consequences of this total dereliction of national character and interests, in order to gratify the short-sighted passions of an illiberal democracy, rapidly developed themselves. Russia, encouraged by the success with which she had broken the barrier of Hindostan in Central Asia, continued her aggressions on the Ottoman power in Europe. The Turkish fleet was destroyed by the assistance of a British force at Navarino ; the Russian arms were carried across the Balkan through British sufferance to Adrianople ; and the Ottoman empire, trembling for its existence, was glad to subscribe a treaty which virtually surrendered the Danube and its whole northern defences to the Russian power. Not content with this, the rulers of England, during the halcyon days of the Reform mania, descended to still lower degradation and unparalleled acts of infatuation. When the Pasha of Egypt revolted against the Ottoman power, which seemed thus alike deserted by its allies and crushed by its enemies, and the disastrous battle of Konieh threatened to bring the Egyptian legions to the shores of Scutari, we turned a deaf ear to the earnest prayer of the distressed Sultan for aid. Engrossed in striving to conquer Antwerp in northern, and Lisbon in southern Europe, for the advantage of revolutionary France, we had not a guinea or a gun to spare to preserve the interests or uphold the honour of England in the Dardanelles, and we threw Turkey, as the price of existence, into the arms of Russia. The rest is well known. The Muscovite battalions gave the requisite aid ; the domes of Constantinople reflected the lights of their bivouacs on the

Mountain of the Giant; the arms of Ibrahim recoiled before this new and unexpected antagonist; and the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi delivered Turkey, bound hand and foot, into the hands of Russia, rendered the Euxine a Muscovite lake, and for ever shut out the British flag from the navigation of its waters, or the defence of the Turkish metropolis.

The natural results of this timorous and vacillating policy, coupled with the well-known and fearful reduction of our naval and military force in India, were not slow in developing themselves. It soon appeared that the British name had ceased to be regarded with any respect in the East; and that all the influence derived from our victories and diplomacy in Central Asia had been lost. It is needless to go into details, the results of which are well known to the public, though the diplomatic secrets connected with them have not yet been revealed. Suffice it to say that Persia, which for a quarter of a century had been the firm ally, and in fact the advanced post of the British power in India, deserted by us, and subdued by Russia, was constrained to throw herself into the arms of the latter. The Persian army was speedily organised on a better and more effective footing, under direction of Russian officers; and several thousand Russian troops, disguised under the name of deserters, were incorporated with and gave consistency to it. The British officers, who had hitherto had the direction of that force, were obliged to retire; insult, the invariable precursor in the East of injury, was heaped upon the British subjects; redress was demanded in vain by the British ambassador; and Sir John M'Neil himself was at length compelled to leave the court of Teheran, from the numerous crosses and vexations to which he was exposed. Having thus got quit of the shadow even of British influence throughout the whole of Persia, the Russians were not long in following out the now smoothed highway towards Hindostan; the siege of Herat, the head of the defile which leads to the Indus, was undertaken by the Persian troops, under Russian guidance; and Russian emissaries and diplomacy, ever preceding their arms, had already crossed the Himalaya snows, and were stirring up the seeds of subdued but unextinguished hostility in the Birman empire, among the

Nepaulese mountaineers, and the discontented rajahs of Hindostan.

There is but one road by which any hostile army ever has approached, or ever can approach India from the northward. Alexander the Great, Timour, Gengis Khan, Nadir Shah, have all penetrated Hindostan by the same route. That road has, for three thousand years, been the beaten and well-known track by which the mercantile communication has been kept up between the plains of the Ganges and the steppes of Upper Asia. Herat stands at the head of this defile. Its population, which amounts to one hundred thousand souls, and its wealth, which renders it in many respects by far the most important city in the heart of Asia, have been entirely formed by the caravan trade, which from time immemorial has passed through its walls, going and returning from Persia to Hindostan. When Napoleon, in conjunction with the Emperor Paul, projected the invasion of our Indian possessions by a joint army of French infantry and Russian Cossacks, the route marked out was Astrakan, Astrabad, Herat, Candahar, the Bolan pass, and the Indus, to Delhi. There never can be any other road overland to India but this, or its branch from Candahar through the Khybir pass; for to the eastward, inaccessible snowy ranges of mountains preclude the possibility of an army getting through; while to the west, parched and impassable deserts afford obstacles still more formidable, which the returning soldiers of Alexander overcame only with the loss of half their numbers. It is quite clear, therefore, that Herat is the vital point of communication between Russia and Hindostan; and that whoever is in possession of it, either actually, or by the intervention of a subsidiary or allied force, need never disquiet himself about apprehensions that an enemy will penetrate through the long and difficult defiles which lead in its rear to Hindostan.

Since our empire in India had waxed so powerful as to attract the envy of the Asiatic tramontane nations, it became, therefore, *a matter of necessity* to maintain our influence among the nations who held the keys of this pass. Affghanistan was to India what Piedmont has long been to Italy; even a second Hannibal or Napoleon might be stopped in its long mountain passes and interminable barren hills. If,

indeed, the politics of India could be confined only to its native powers, it might be wise to consider the Indus and the Himalaya as our frontier, and to disregard entirely the distant hostility or complicated diplomacy of the northern Asiatic states. But as long as India, like Italy, possesses the fatal gift of beauty ; as long as its harvests are coveted by northern sterility, and its riches by barbarian poverty, so long must the ruler of the land preserve with jealous care the entrance into its bosom, and sit with frowning majesty at the entrance of the pass by which "the blue-eyed myriads of the Baltic coast" may find a way into its fabled plains.

There was a time when British influence might with ease, and at little cost, have been established in the Affghanistan passes. Dost Mahommed was a usurper, and his legal claims to the throne would not bear a comparison with those of Shah Shoojah. But he was a usurper who had conciliated and won the affections of the people, and his vigour and success had given a degree of prosperity to Affghanistan which it had not for centuries experienced. Kamram, the sultan of Herat, was drawn to him by inclination, and both were animated by hereditary and inveterate hatred of the Persian power. They would willingly, therefore, have united themselves with Great Britain to secure a barrier against northern invasion ; and such an alliance would have been founded on the only durable bond of connexion among nations—mutual advantage, and the sense of a formidable impending common danger. The states of Candahar and Cabool were in the front of the danger ; the Russian and Persian arms could never have approached the Indus until they were subdued ; and consequently their adhesion to our cause, if we would only give them effectual support, might be relied upon as certain. It is well known that Dost Mahommed might have been firmly attached to the British alliance within these few years by the expenditure of a hundred thousand pounds, and the aid of a few British officers to organise his forces. And when it is recollected that the Sultan of Herat, alone and unaided by us, held out against the whole power of Persia, directed by Russian officers, for one year and nine months, it is evident both with what a strong spirit of resistance to northern aggression the Affghanistan states are animated,

and what elements of resistance they possess among themselves, even when unaided, against northern ambition.

The immense advantage of gaining the support of the tribes inhabiting Affghanistan, thus holding in their hands the keys of Hindostan, was foregone by the British power in India, partly from the dilapidated state to which the army had been reduced by the miserable retrenchment forced upon the Government by the democratic cry for economy at home, and partly from the dread of involving ourselves in hostility with Runjeet Sing, the formidable chief of Lahore, whose hostility to the Affghans was hereditary and inveterate. There can be little doubt that the conclusion of a treaty, offensive and defensive, with the powers of Cabool, would have excited great discontent, if not provoked open hostility, at the court of Lahore. In relinquishing their hold of the Affghan states, from the dread of compromising their relations with the wily potentate of the Punjaub, the British Government in India were only acting upon that system of temporising, conceding, and shunning *present* danger, which has characterised all their public acts ever since the influence of the urban masses became predominant in the British councils. But it is now apparent that, in breaking with the Affghans to conciliate the Maharajah, the British incurred the greater ultimate to avoid the present lesser danger. Runjeet Sing, indeed, was a formidable power, with seventy thousand men, and one hundred and fifty pieces of cannon under his command. But his situation, between the British territory on the one side, and the Affghans on the other, rendered him incapable of making any effectual resistance. His military force was by no means equal to what had been wielded by Tippoo or the Mahrattas, and his rear was exposed to the incursions of his hereditary and inveterate enemies in the Affghanistan mountains. Still more than all, his territories were pierced by the great and navigable river of the Indus—the best possible base for British operations, capable of conveying both the muniments of war and the provisions for an army into the heart of his dominions. In these circumstances, it is evident that the submission of Runjeet Sing must soon have become a matter of necessity; or, at all events, even if we had been forced into hostilities with him, it would have

been a far less formidable contest than that into which we have been driven, by abandoning the Affghans and undertaking the late expedition to Cabool. The one would have been what the subjugation and conquest of Prussia was to Napoleon, the other was an expedition fraught with all the cost and perils of the advance to Moscow.

Notwithstanding these perils and this cost, however, we have no doubt that, at the time it was undertaken, the expedition to Affghanistan had become a matter of necessity. We had been reduced to such a pass by the economy, concession, and pusillanimity of former Governments, that we had no alternative but either to see the whole of Central Asia and Northern Hindostan arrayed in one formidable league, under Russian guidance, against us, or to make a desperate and hazardous attempt to regain our lost character. We have preferred the latter alternative ; and the expedition of Lord Auckland, boldly conceived and vigorously executed, has hitherto, at least, been crowned with the most signal success. That it was also attended with great and imminent hazard is equally certain ; but the existence of that peril, imposed upon us by the shortsighted parsimonious spirit of the mercantile democratic communities which for fifteen years past have swayed the British empire, is no impeachment whatever, of either the wisdom or the necessity of the adventurous step which was at last resolved on. It only shows the straits to which a great nation must speedily be reduced when its Government, in an evil hour, yields to the insidious cry for democratic retrenchment.

Already the beneficial effects of this bold policy have become apparent. The crossing of the Indus by a powerful British army, the storming of Ghuznee, the fall of Candahar and Cabool, and the restoration of Shah Shoojah to the throne of his ancestors, have resounded through the whole of Asia, and restored the honour of the British name. The doubtful fidelity of the Rajah of Lahore has been overawed into submission ; the undisguised hostility of the court of Persia has terminated, and friendly relations are on the eve of being re-established ; and the indecision of the Sultan of Herat and his brave followers has been decided by the terror of the British arms, and the

arrival of a train of artillery within its ruined bastions. As Britons, we rejoice from the bottom of our hearts at these glorious successes; and we care not who were the Ministry at the head of affairs when they were achieved. They were undertaken in a truly British spirit; executed by whom they may, they emanated from Conservative principles. As much as the ruinous reductions and parsimonious spirit of Lord William Bentinck's Administration bespoke the poisonous influence of democratic retrenchment in the great council of the empire, so much does the expedition to Affghanistan bespeak the felicitous revival of the true English spirit in the same assembly. At both periods it is easy to see, that, though not nominally possessed of the reins of power, her Majesty's Opposition really ruled the state. In the Affghan-istan expedition there was very little of the economy which cut in twain the Indian army, but very much of the spirit which animated the British troops at Assaye and Laswaree; there was very little of the truckling which brought the Russians to Constantinople, but a great deal of the energy which carried the English to Paris.

In a military point of view, the expedition to Affghanistan is one of the most memorable events of modern times. *For the first time since the days of Alexander the Great*, a civilised army has penetrated the mighty barrier of deserts and mountains which separates Persia from Hindostan; and the prodigy has been exhibited to an astonished world, of a remote island in the European seas pushing forward its mighty arms into the heart of Asia, and carrying its victorious standards into the strongholds of Mahometan faith and the cradle of the Mogul empire. Neither the intricate streams of the Punjab, nor the rapid flow of the Indus, nor the waterless mountains of Affghanistan, nor the far-famed bastions of Ghuznee, have been able to arrest our course. For the first time in the history of the world, the tide of conquest has flowed *up from Hindostan into Central Asia*; the European race has asserted its wonted superiority over the Asiatic; reversing the march of Timour and Alexander, the sable battalions of the Ganges have appeared as conquerors on the frontiers of Persia, and on the confines of the steppes of Samarcand. So marvellous and unprecedented an event is indeed fitted to awaken the contempla-

tion of every thoughtful mind. It speaks volumes as to the mighty step made by the human race in the last five hundred years, and indicates the vast agency and unbounded effects of that free spirit, of which Britain is the centre, which has thus, for a season at least, inverted the heretofore order of nature, made the natives of Hindostan appear as victors in the country of its ancient conquerors, and brought the standards of civilised Europe, though in the inverse order, into the footsteps of the phalanx of Alexander.

Though such, however, have been the marvels of the British expedition to Central Asia, yet it is not to be disguised that it was attended by at least equal perils; and never, perhaps, since the British standard appeared on the plains of Hindostan, was their empire in such danger as during the dependence of this glorious but hazardous expedition. It was, literally speaking, to our Indian empire what the expedition to Moscow was to the European dominion of Napoleon. Hitherto, indeed, the result has been different, and we devoutly hope that, in that respect, the dissimilarity will continue. But in both cases the danger was the same. It was the moving forward a large force so far from its resources and the base of its operations, which in both cases constituted the danger. If any serious check had been sustained by our troops in that distant enterprise; if Runjeet Sing had proved openly treacherous, and assailed our rear and cut off our supplies when the bulk of our force was far advanced in the Affghanistan defiles; if the Bolan pass had been defended with a courage equal to its physical strength; if the powder-bags which blew open the gates of Ghuznee had missed fire, or the courage of those who bore them had quailed under the extraordinary perils of their mission, the fate of the expedition would in all probability have been changed, and a disaster as great as the cutting off of Crassus and his legions in Mesopotamia, would have resounded like a clap of thunder through the whole of Asia. Few if any of the brave men who had penetrated into Affghanistan would ever have returned; the Burmese, the Nepaulese would immediately have appeared in arms; the Mahratta and Pindaree horse would have reassembled round their predatory standards; and, while the British empire in Hindostan rocked to its foundation,

an Affghanistan army, directed by Russian officers, and swelled by the predatory tribes of Central Asia, would have poured down, thirsting for plunder and panting for blood, on the devoted plains of Hindostan.

Subsequent events have already revealed, in the clearest manner, the imminent danger in which the English empire in the East was placed at the period of the Affghanistan expedition. So low had the reputation of the British name sunk in the East, that even the Chinese, the most unwarlike and least precipitate of the Asiatic empires, had ventured to offer a signal injury to the British interests, and insult to the British name; and so miserably deficient were Government in any previous preparation for the danger, that it was not for twelve months after the insult was offered, that ships of war could be fitted out in the British harbours to attempt to seek for redress. It is now ascertained that a vast conspiracy had been long on foot in the Indian peninsula to overturn our power; in the strongholds of some of the lesser rajahs in the southern part of the peninsula, enormous military stores have been found accumulated; and not a doubt can remain, that, if any serious disaster had happened to our army in Central Asia, not only would the Burmese and Nepaulese have instantly commenced hostilities, but a formidable insurrection would have broken out among the semi-independent rajahs, in the very vitals of our power. And yet it was while resting on the smouldering fires of such a volcano, that Lord William Bentinck and the Liberal Administration of India thought fit to reduce our military force to one-half, and shake the fidelity of the native troops by trifling but irritating reductions of their allowances.

But this proved hostility of so large a portion of the native powers, suggests matter for further and most serious consideration. It is clear, that although the British Government has to an immense degree benefited India, yet it has done so chiefly by the preservation of peace, and the suppression of robbery, throughout its vast dominions; and it is painfully evident, that hardly any steps have yet been taken to reconcile the natives to our dominion, by the extended market which we have opened to their industry. The startling fact which Mr Montgomery Martin has

clearly established, that notwithstanding all that was prophesied of the trade to India, it has been, including exports and imports, *less for the last twenty years than for the twenty years preceding*, clearly demonstrates some vital defect in our colonial policy.* Nor is it difficult to see where that error is to be found. We have loaded the produce of India—sugar, indigo, &c.—with duties of nearly a *hundred* per cent, while we have deluged them with our own manufactures at an import duty of *two or three* per cent. In our anxiety to find a vent for our own manufactures on the continent of Hindostan, we seem to have entirely forgotten that there was another requisite indispensably necessary towards the success of our projects even for our own interests,—to give them the means of paying for them. Our conduct towards our colonies, equally with that to foreign states, has exhibited reciprocity *all on one side*—with this material difference, that we have, in our blind anxiety to conciliate foreign states, allowed the whole benefits of the reciprocity treaties to rest with them; while, in our selfish legislation towards our colonial subjects, we have taken the whole to ourselves.

To have engaged in and successfully accomplished such an undertaking; to have overcome so many and such formidable intervening obstacles, and planted the British guns in triumph on the walls of Herat, is one of the most glorious exploits which has ever graced the long annals of British military prowess. That our soldiers were undaunted in battle and irresistible in the breach has been often proved, in the fields alike of Asiatic and European fame. But here they have exhibited qualities of a totally different kind, and in which hitherto they were not supposed to have been equal to the troops of other states. They have successfully accomplished marches, unparalleled in modern times for their length and hardship; surmounted mountain ranges, compared to which the passage of the St Bernard by Napoleon must sink into insignificance; and solved the great problem, so much debated, and hitherto unascertained

* See *Colonial Magazine*, No. I., article—"Foreign Trade to India,"—a newly-established miscellany, full of valuable information, and which, if conducted on right principles, will prove of the very highest importance.

in military science, as to the practicability of a European force, with the implements and incumbrances of modern warfare, surmounting the desert and mountain tracts which separate Persia from Hindostan. Involved as we are in the pressing interests of domestic politics, and in the never-ending agitation of domestic concerns, the attention of the British public has been little attracted by this stupendous event; but it is one evidently calculated to fix the attention of the great military nations on the Continent, and which will stand forth in imperishable lustre in the annals of history.

There is one result which may and should follow from our undertakings in Affghanistan, which, if properly improved, may render it the means of strengthening in the most essential manner our possessions in the East. The Indus and the Himalaya are the natural frontier of our dominions; they are what the Danube and the Rhine were to the Romans, and the latter of these streams to Napoleon's empire. The Indus is navigable for a thousand miles, and for nine hundred by steamers of war and mercantile vessels of heavy burden. It descends nearly in a straight line from the impassable barrier of the Himalaya to the Indian ocean; its stream is so rapid, and its surface so broad, that no hostile force can possibly cross it in the face of a powerful defensive marine. Never was an empire which had such a frontier for its protection; never was such a base afforded for military operations as on both its banks. Provisions for any number of soldiers; warlike stores to any amount; cannon sufficient for a hundred thousand men, can with ease ascend its waves. Vain is the rapidity of its current; the power of steam has given to civilised man the means of overcoming it; and before many years are expired, British vessels, from every harbour in the United Kingdom, may ascend that mighty stream, and open fresh and hitherto unheard-of markets for British industry in the boundless regions of Central Asia. Now, then, is the time to secure the advantages, and gain the mastery of this mercantile artery and frontier stream; and, by means of fortified stations on its banks, and a powerful fleet of armed steamers in its bosom, to gain that impregnable barrier to our Indian possessions, against which, if duly supported by manly vigour

at home, and wise administration in our Indian provinces, all the efforts of Northern ambition will beat in vain.

But there is one consideration deserving of especial notice which necessarily follows from this successful irruption. The problem of marching overland to India is now solved ; the Russian guns have come down from St Petersburg to Herat, and the British have come up from Delhi to the same place. English cannon are now planted in the embrasures, against which, twelve months ago, the Russian shot were directed ; and if twenty thousand British could march from Delhi to Candahar and Cabool, *forty thousand Russians may march from Astrakan to the Ganges and Calcutta*. Our success has opened the path in the East to Russian ambition ;—the stages of our ascending army point out the stations for their descending host ; and the ease with which our triumph has been effected, will dispel any doubts which they may have entertained as to the practicability of ultimately accomplishing the long-cherished object of their ambition, and conquering in Calcutta the empire of the East. This is the inevitable result of our success ; but it is one which should excite no desponding feeling in any British bosom ; and we allude to it, not with the selfish, unpatriotic design of chilling the national ardour at our success, but in order, if possible, to arouse the British people to a sense of the new and more extended duties to which they are called, and the wider sphere of danger and hostility in which they are involved.

It is no longer possible to disguise that the sphere of hostility and diplomatic exertion has been immensely extended by our success in Affghanistan. Hitherto the politics of India have formed, as it were, a world to themselves ; a dark range of intervening mountains or arid deserts was supposed to separate Hindostan from Central Asia ; and however much we might be disquieted at home by the progress of Russian or French ambition, no serious fears were entertained that either would be able to accomplish the Quixotic exploit of passing the western range of the Himalaya mountains. Now, however, this veil has been rent asunder—this mountain screen has been penetrated. The Russian power in Persia, and the British in India, now stand almost face to face ; the advanced posts of both have touched

Herat ; the highroad from St Petersburg to Calcutta has been laid open by British hands. The advanced position we have gained must now be maintained ; if we retire, even from tributary or allied states, the charm of our invincibility is gone ; the day when the god Terminus recoils before a foreign enemy, is the commencement of a decline. We do not bring forward this consideration in order to blame the expedition ; but in order to show into what a contest, and that with what a power, it has necessarily brought us. Affghanistan is the outpost of Russia ; Dost Mohammed, now exiled from his throne, was a vassal of the Czar ; and we shall one day have to contend for the empire of the East, not with the rajahs of India, but with the Muscovite battalions.

The reality of these anticipations as to the increased amount of the danger of a collision with Russia, which has arisen from the great approximation of our outposts to theirs, which the Affghanistan expedition has occasioned, is apparent. Already Russia has taken the alarm, and the expedition against Khiva shows that she has not less the inclination, than she unquestionably has the power, of amply providing for herself against what she deems the impending danger. No one can for a moment suppose that that expedition is really intended to chastise the rebellious Khan. Thirty thousand men, and a large train of artillery, are not sent against an obscure chieftain in Tartary, whom a few regiments of Cossacks would soon reduce to obedience. A glance at the map will at once show what was the real object in view. Khiva is situated on the Oxus, and the Oxus flows to the north-west from the mountains which take their rise from the northern boundary of Cabool. Its stream is navigable to the foot of the Affghanistan mountains, and from the point where water communication ceases, it is a passage of only five or six days to the valley of Cabool. If, therefore, the Russians once establish themselves at Khiva, they will have no difficulty in reaching the possessions of Shah Shoojah ; and their establishment will go far to outweigh the influence established by the British, by the Affghanistan expedition, among the Affghan tribes. Already, if recent accounts can be relied on, this effect has become apparent. Dost Mahommed, expelled from his kingdom, has found support among the Tartar tribes ; backed

by their support, he has already reappeared over the hills, and regained part of his dominions ; and the British troops, on their return to Affghanistan, have already received orders to halt. Let us hope that it is not in our case, as it was in that of the French at Moscow, that when they thought the campaign over, it was only going to commence.

Regarding, then, our success in Affghanistan as having accelerated by several years the approach of this great contest, it becomes the British nation well to consider what preparations they have made *at home* to maintain it. Have we equipped and manned a fleet capable of withstanding the formidable armament which Nicholas has always ready for immediate operations in the Baltic ? Have we five-and-twenty ships of the line and thirty frigates ready to meet the *thirty* ships of the line and eighteen frigates which Nicholas has always equipped for sea at Cronstadt ? Have we thirty thousand men in London ready to meet the thirty thousand veterans whom the Czar has constantly prepared to step on board his fleet on the shores of the Baltic ? Alas ! we have none of these things. We could not, to save London from destruction or the British empire from conquest, fit out three ships of the line to protect the mouth of the Thames, or assemble ten thousand men to save Woolwich or Portsmouth from conflagration. What between Radical economy in our army estimates, Whig parsimony in our naval preparations, and Chartist violence in our manufacturing cities, we have neither a naval nor a military force to protect ourselves from destruction. All that Sir Charles Adam, one of the Lords of the Admiralty, could say on this subject last session of Parliament was, that we had *three ships of the line and three guard-ships to protect the shores of England*. Never was such a proof afforded that we had sunk down from the days of giants to those of pigmies, than the use of such an argument by a lord of the British Admiralty. Why, thirty years ago, we sent thirty-nine ships of the line to attack the enemy's naval station at Antwerp, without raising the blockade of one of his harbours, from Gibraltar to the North Cape. Herein, then, lies the monstrous absurdity, the unparalleled danger of our present national policy, that we are vigorous even to temerity in the East, and parsimonious even to pusillanimity in the West ;

and that while we give Russia a fair pretext for hostility, and perhaps some ground for complaint in the centre of Asia, we make no preparation whatever to resist her hostility on the shores of England.

The contrast between the marvellous vigour recently infused, though with no adequate previous preparation, into our Indian Government, and the niggardly spirit with which all our establishments are starved down at home, would be inconceivable if we did not recollect by what opposite motives our Government is regulated in Hindostan and in the British islands. Taxation in India falls upon the inhabitants, who are unrepresented; taxation at home falls upon the ten-pounders, who have a numerical majority in Parliament. We never doubted the inclination of a democracy to dip their hands *in other people's pockets*; what we doubted was their inclination, save in the last extremity, to put them into their own.

Disregard of the future, devotion to present objects, has, in all ages, been the characteristic of the masses of mankind. We need not wonder that the British populace are distinguished by the well-known limited vision of their class, when all the eloquence of Demosthenes failed in inducing the most enlightened republic of antiquity to take any measures to ward off the danger arising from the ambition of Philip of Macedon; and all the wisdom of Washington was unable to communicate to the greatest republic of modern times strength or foresight sufficient to prevent its capital from being taken, and its arsenals pillaged, by a British division not three thousand strong. Unless, however, the Conservative press can succeed in rousing the British public to a sense of their danger on this subject, and the Conservative leaders in Parliament take up the matter earnestly and vigorously, it may safely be pronounced that the days of the British empire are numbered.

No empire can possibly exist for any length of time which provokes hostility in its distant possessions, while it neglects preparation in the heart of its power; which buckles on its gloves and puts on the helmet, but leaves the breastplate and the cuirass behind. If a Russian fleet of thirty ships of the line appears off the Nore, it will not be by deriding their prowess, or calling them a "pasteboard

fleet," that the danger will be averted from the arsenals and the treasures of England. The Russian sailors do not possess anything like the nautical skill or naval habits of the British ; but they are admirably trained to ball-practice, they possess the native courage of their race, and they will stand to their guns with any sailors in Europe. Remember the words of Nelson—" Lay yourself alongside of a Frenchman, but outmanœuvre a Russian."

The manifest and not yet terminated dangers with which the Affghanistan expedition was attended, should operate as a warning, and they will be cheaply purchased if they prove a timely one, to the British people, of the enormous dangers, not merely to the national honour and independence, but to the vital pecuniary interests of every individual in the state, of continuing any longer the pernicious system of present economy, and total disregard of future danger, which for twenty years has characterised every department of our Government. Why is it that England has now been compelled in the East, for the first time, to incur the enormous perils of the Affghanistan expedition ; to hazard, as it were, the very existence of our Eastern empire upon a single throw ; and adventure a large proportion of the British army, and the magic charm of British invincibility, upon a perilous advance, far beyond the utmost frontiers of Hindostan, into the heart of Asia ? Simply because previous preparation had been abandoned, ultimate danger disregarded ; because retrenchment was the order of the day, and Government yielded to the ever-popular cry of *present economy* ; because the noble naval and military establishment of former times was reduced one-half, or allowed to expire, in the childish belief that it never again would be required. Rely upon it, a similar conduct will one day produce a similar necessity to the British empire. It will be found, and that too ere many years have passed over, that the Duke of Wellington was right when he said, that a great empire cannot with safety wage a little war ; and that nothing but present danger and future disaster will result from a system which blindly shuts its eyes to the future, and never looks beyond the conciliating the masses by a show of economy at the moment. An Affghanistan expedition—a Moscow campaign—will be necessary to ward

off impending danger, or restore the sunk credit of the British name : happy if the contest can thus be averted from our own shores, and if by incurring distant dangers we can escape domestic subjugation.

But let not foreign nations imagine, from all that has been said or may be said by the Conservatives on this vital subject, that Great Britain has now lost her means of defence, or that, if a serious insult or injury is offered to her, she may not soon be brought into a condition to take a fearful vengeance upon her enemies. The same page of history which tells us that democratic states never can be brought to foresee remote dangers, or incur present burdens to guard against it, when the danger is present, and strikes the senses of the multitude, tells us that they are capable of the most stupendous exertions. That Great Britain, in the event of a war breaking out in her present supine, unprepared state, would sustain in the outset very great disasters, is clear ; but it is not by any ordinary calamities that a power of such slow growth and present magnitude as England is to be subdued. She now possesses 2,800,000 tons of shipping, and numbers 160,000 seamen in her commercial navy ; and a fleet of seven hundred steamboats, more than all the rest of Europe put together possesses, daily coasts along her shores. Here are all the elements of a powerful marine ; at no period did Great Britain possess such a foundation for naval strength within her bosom. What is wanting is not the elements of an irresistible naval force, but the sagacity in the people to foresee the approaching necessity for its establishment, and the virtue in the Government to propose the burdens indispensable for its restoration. In the experienced difficulty of either communicating this foresight to the one, or imparting this virtue to the other, may be traced the well-known and often-predicted effects of democratic ascendancy. But that same ascendancy, if the spirit of the people is roused by experienced disgrace, or their interests affected by present calamity, would infallibly make the most incredible exertions ; and a navy, greater than any which ever yet issued from the British harbours, might sally forth from our sea-girt isle, to carry, like the French Revolutionary armies, devastation and ruin into all the naval establishments of Europe. No such career of naval conquest, however, is

either needed for the glory, or suited to the interests of England ; and it is as much from a desire to avert that ultimate forcible and most painful conversion of all the national energies to warlike objects, as to prevent the immediate calamities which it would occasion, that we earnestly press upon the country the *immediate* adoption, at any cost, of that great increase to our naval and military establishments which can alone avert one or both of these calamities.

THE OLD SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

[BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE, Nov. 1834]

“THE Scotch,” says O’Connell, to one of his *well-informed* assemblies, “boast of having never been subdued by the English, and of having owed all their prosperity to the maintenance of their independence: I will tell you the reason why they were never conquered—their country was not worth conquering.”—(Loud applause.) These words convey a clear idea of the composition and knowledge of the assemblies which he is desirous of rearing up to supreme dominion in the state. In this way did the Great Agitator flatter the vanity of his Irish followers, by insinuating that they had fallen a victim to England, because their country presented too fair a spoil to its rapacity; while the Scotch had maintained a savage independence only from having possessed nothing which was worth the taking. Many of our own unworthy compatriots have given too great currency to the same idea, by their unfounded and monstrous assertions, that the original institutions of Scotland were the height of human absurdity, a compound of feudal tyranny and savage violence; and that all the prosperity which now distinguishes its surface is to be ascribed to the union with England, and the fortunate tempering of the rigour of its native customs thence arising, by the liberal intermixture of Southern freedom. In this perverted and ignorant abuse of the Scottish institutions, the late Lord Advocate (Jeffrey) took the lead. He declared in his place in Parliament, during the debate on the Reform Bill, that “he would tear to pieces its electoral institutions; he would not leave one shred or patch standing.” And he has kept his word; for certainly not one vestige of the ancient Scottish

constitution is now remaining. Now that the thing has been done, and the domestic revolution of Scotland rendered complete, it may not be unprofitable to take a survey of the institutions framed, and the laws passed, by a legislature so much the object of vituperation, and see whether they really deserve the censures at the hands of the friends of freedom which, during the contests of faction, have been so liberally applied to them.

We take for granted, that the proper object of government in every state is *ut cives feliciter vivant*; that the greatest possible facility should be given to the industry and exertions of the people; that they should enjoy all the freedom consistent with their own welfare, or the general stability of society; and that the security of their persons and property should be rendered complete. On these points we cordially agree with our opponents; the only difference betwixt us is as to the means by which these objects are likely to be attained. Let us consider what the Scottish nation and the Scottish legislature have done on these points, as compared with those of England and Ireland, before we join in the sweeping condemnation so plentifully applied to them by the Liberals in our own and the neighbouring countries.

What the Scottish nation has done to maintain its *independence* is well known to every person having the most slender historical information. It is a pleasant interlude in a speech, doubtless, for Mr O'Connell to tell his Irish supporters that the Scotch were never conquered because they were not worth conquering; but if he had read the annals of his own or the neighbouring state, he would have learned, that while Ireland was conquered at once by Henry II. with 1100 knights and 2000 foot-soldiers, and has ever since been retained in subjection by a force inconsiderable, indeed, when compared with the magnitude of its population, Scotland has been invaded, not once, but twenty times, by English armies, sixty, seventy, and eighty thousand strong, and on all these occasions they were, in the end, baffled and repulsed; that, though never possessing a fifth part of the population of England, nor a tenth part of its wealth, she maintained during three centuries (from 1300 to 1600) an almost uninterrupted struggle with her gigantic

neighbour ; that the utmost efforts, during this long period, were made by the English monarchs, and made in vain, for her subjugation ; that if she suffered during this long period much devastation and injury from the English arms, she inflicted nearly as much as she received ; and that, though often reduced to grievous straits from the divisions and treachery of her nobles, the sterility of her soil, and the indiscipline of her armies, she was to the last unsubdued, and finally saw her own monarchs ascend the throne of the three kingdoms. He would have learned that the power which at once beat down the clans of Ireland, which waged a doubtful war of a hundred and twenty years' duration with France, which repeatedly marched across the whole territory of that great nation, crowned its own king within the walls of Paris, and exhibited that of its first-rate opponent a captive within those of London, was never able permanently to subdue a foot of Scottish land ; that the splendid chivalry of England ever recoiled in the end from the stubborn spearmen of Scotland ; that the greatest defeat recorded in the English annals came from the unconquerable bands of Robert Bruce, and that it required all the glories of Cressy, Poitiers, and Azincour, to blazon over the fell disaster of Bannockburn. It is truly a proof of the march of intellect, of the prodigious spread of information which the diffusion of newspapers and the growth of democracy have produced, to see a popular Irish demagogue venture to hazard the assertion, before a meeting of electors in the British dominions, that Scotland was never conquered because it was not worth the taking ; and to hear that sentiment applauded by an assembly in a nation which was conquered by eleven hundred knights, and has never since been able to face five English brigades, in presence of the descendants of those who hurled back *twelve English invasions*, many of them led by English monarchs, at the head of forces twice as numerous as the British who vanquished Napoleon on the field of Waterloo.

It is another proof of that vast diffusion of historical and political information, from the agency of the popular press, to hear the assertion so generally believed which was hazarded by the same learned Lord Advocate in Parliament,

that Scotland had never evinced the spirit of genuine freedom, and that a total subversion of all its institutions was essential to the development of that necessary element in social prosperity. Doubtless that learned lord, when he hazarded that assertion in such an assembly, was fully acquainted with the facts, and had many examples in his eye to corroborate the assertion. He probably grounded his allegation as to the total want of a free or independent spirit in Scotland, upon the singularly tame and feeble efforts which Scotland made in behalf of the Reformation ; upon the timidity and irresolution displayed by the Covenanters in the mountains of Ayrshire ; upon the influence retained by its hierarchy in the formation of the Reformed church, and the entire absence of anything like republican equality in the constitution of its General Assembly. Or did he found it upon the weak and insufficient support which the Scotch gave to the cause of freedom during the Great Rebellion ; the Scotch who first took up arms against the government of Charles I., who brought the whole array of their nation to the heights of Lauder, when as yet not one sword had been drawn or musket fired to the south of the Tweed ; and alone, by their seasonable support, gave victory to the sinking cause of freedom in England at Marston Moor ? Or had the learned lord in his eye the stubborn and desperate resistance opposed by the Covenanters of Scotland to the cruelties and the severity of Charles II., or the memorable declaration from the Scottish Estates that James II. had *forfeited* his title to the throne in 1688, when the English only ventured to assert that he had *deserted* it ; or the free and independent manner in which the Scottish Parliament tied up the most dangerous powers of government by the Act 1701, the Habeas Corpus Act of Scotland, and a more effectual safeguard of the liberty of the subject than even that celebrated bulwark of English freedom ? The learned lord will not surely deny to the heroes of July, the citizens of the barricades, on whom he pronounced so eloquent a eulogium in August 1830, the praise of being actuated by an independent spirit ; but yet these boasted defenders of freedom have never yet passed any similar law for the security of that first of blessings, the freedom of the subject ;

and thousands of political prisoners now languish in the capacious state-prisons of France, without any prospect of being brought to trial, or any means of compelling their liberation ; while the Scottish legislature, who “ never had a tincture of the spirit of freedom,” secured that inestimable right for the people of their country above a hundred and thirty years ago.

The wisdom and admirable quality of the old Scottish laws, though less generally known, is still more worthy of consideration, and we know not a subject to which a few pages of this miscellany can more beneficially, or in a more interesting manner, be applied. Our numerous Southern readers need not start, or turn over the pages to some more inviting theme. We are not going to deluge them with that driest of all subjects to a Southern ear, Scotch law ; we propose only to touch on matters interesting to all, from the importance and magnitude of the effects with which they are attended. And if the schoolmaster has been abroad to any good purpose, if the people of this country are at all prepared for the important duties of self-government to which they are called by their rulers, no more useful or attractive subject can be presented to their consideration than the means by which another nation has succeeded in obtaining, without confusion or bloodshed, by the mere wisdom of its legislature, all the great objects which it is the professed aim of the popular party to obtain for the people of England and Ireland at this time.

A proper settlement of the Tithe question, and a distribution of the property of the church, in a fair proportion, among those who discharge ecclesiastical duties, is the great object of the democratic party at this moment, both in England and Ireland ; and, doubtless, the arrangement of their conflicting interests, on a just and durable footing, is one of the greatest objects of a statesman’s ambition that can be conceived. The abusers of Scottish institutions, however, will be surprised to learn, that these great and intricate questions were entirely and satisfactorily resolved by the Scottish Parliament, and by the decrees-arbitral of Charles I., two hundred years ago ; an adequate provision secured for the clergy, and the valuation and sale of tithes

settled on so equitable a footing, that since that time their weight has been wholly unfelt by the Scottish cultivators.*

It is the boast, and the deserved boast, of the present Administration, that they alone have had courage to face the enormous abuses of the English Poor Laws ; and that, whether the recent act do or do not provide improvement in practice, they have first ventured to approach the subject, and collect a mass of information from which its evils may in future be rectified. Granting them, as we are anxious to do, every credit for the attempts they have made on this subject, we must at the same time remark, that they are only following (*sed heu quanto intervallo !*) the footsteps of the Scottish Legislature ; and that, two hundred and fifty years ago, the whole of that great subject was settled by them on a footing to which subsequent wisdom has been able to add nothing in the way of improvement, while subsequent experience has taught nothing in the way of rectification. The Scottish Poor Laws have now stood the test, not only of ages in point of time, but of every possible change in point of society ; they have been found equally efficacious in the relief of real suffering, and equally effective in checking the growth of fictitious pauperism, in the Highlands of Perthshire as in the plains of the Lothians, among the weavers of Lanarkshire and the shepherds of Selkirk.†

Illegal or arbitrary imprisonment has in every age been the greatest and most formidable engine of despotic power,

* By the Act 1633, c. 19. The Scotch acts are designated by the year in which they were passed.

† By Act 1579, c. 74.

The evils attendant on the *administration* of the Scotch Poor Laws did not arise from any defects in those laws themselves, as they are to be found in the Statute-Book ; but entirely from the decisions of the Court of Session, who, being during the last century almost entirely composed of landholders, and having the dread of the English parochial burdens before their eyes, introduced the rule that the decisions of the Heritors and Kirk-Session as they are called—that is, the body intrusted with the administration of the Poor Funds—could not be reviewed except in the *Court of Session*. As this amounted to a practical abolition of the right of appeal in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, it left the rate-payers in reality judges, without review, in *their own cause*—a state of things which, it need not be said, has led to frequent and grievous injustice, with which the old Scottish Parliament is by no means chargeable. This anomaly has now been removed by the late Poor-Law Amendment Act, 8 & 9 Vict. c. 83, which has given the sheriffs of counties a power of reviewing the decisions of the Heritors and Kirk-Sessions in cases of application for parochial relief ; as our old statute law, and especially the Royal Proclamations of William and Mary, had previously done, but which the Court of Session had held to be obsolete.

and the one against which all the efforts of the friends of freedom should, in an especial manner, be directed. The French democrats have never yet attained to this, the very first step in the advance of real freedom ; and it is the glory of England that the Habeas Corpus Act, passed in the reign of Charles II., first established an effectual barrier against the evils of arbitrary imprisonment in the southern part of the island. Admirable, however, as the provisions of that justly celebrated statute are, they must yield the palm to the Scottish act which, a hundred and thirty years ago, provided an absolute security against the continuance of imprisonment, by any possible contrivance, beyond 140 days ;* whereas, the English act only gives the prisoner a right to insist that his trial shall be brought on at the next assizes, an event which may often be five or six months from the period of committal, and even then allows the prisoners to be remanded to the next assizes, if the prosecutors' witnesses are not ready to attend.

The instruction of the poor is the grand object of the patriots of the present day, and Lord Chancellor Brougham has repeatedly declared, that he desired no other epitaph on his monument than that he was the founder of Universal English Education. Serious doubts may be entertained whether the instruction which it was his object to promote, apart from moral discipline or religious knowledge, would be really a blessing or a curse ; but whatever opinion may be formed on that point, upon which the greatest and wisest men are at variance, and which experience has not enabled us to decide with certainty, one thing is perfectly clear, that the difficulty was solved one hundred and forty years ago by the prophetic wisdom of the Scottish Parliament, which established a system of parochial instruction, universal in its operation, perfect in its kind, and so admirably connected with the religious institutions of the nation, that while the partisans of freedom have ascribed to it all the subsequent prosperity of the nation, the friends of religion and morality have been equally loud in its commendation. And experience has traced to it none of those unhappy consequences which the warmest supporters of universal knowledge admit have too

* By Act 1701, c. 6.

often attended, at least in great cities, the mere concession to the people of the means of information in these times.*

It is the glory of the present age, that more humane ideas have come to prevail generally on the administration of criminal law ; and the names of Romilly, Mackintosh, and Peel, have been made illustrious by their efforts in this benevolent career, not less than by their ability and eloquence in the general field of politics. The great work, however, is yet unfinished ; the Augean stable is but imperfectly cleared out ; many hundred capital crimes still disfigure the English statute-book ; and the returns of the very last year showed, that out of 1400 persons condemned to death, only forty-nine were deemed worthy of execution. When this deplorable inequality may be corrected, or the letter of the law be brought to a level with the humane spirit of the age, it is impossible to foresee ; but this much is certain, that this enormous evil never was experienced in Scottish legislation, which never recognised more than forty capital crimes—nearly one-half of which are of English introduction since the Union,†—and has been familiar from the earliest period with a mitigating power in the hands of the public prosecutor, which has always kept the practice of the criminal courts on a level with the feelings of the times, and has now practically reduced even this comparatively inconsiderable array of capital crimes to five or six.

Judge Blackstone states it with reason as the boast of the English law, that in cases of treason the accused can be convicted only on the concurring testimony of two witnesses, and that he is entitled to receive, fifteen days before his trial, a copy of his indictment, with the names, residence, and professions of the witnesses who are to be adduced, and the assizers who are to serve against him. Every one acquainted with the practice of criminal law, must admire the wisdom and humanity of these regulations, and the more so that they are established in those cases where the Crown appears in good earnest as a prosecutor, and there was the greatest reason to dread an undue preponderance against the prisoner. But, in our admiration of the English law in this particular, we must not overlook the humane and independent spirit of

* By Act 1696, c. 18.

† HUME'S *Criminal Law*. *Introd.*

the Scottish legislature, which, a hundred and sixty-two years ago, conferred these important privileges upon *all criminals in all cases*, and fixed them so indelibly in the practice of that country, that they have ever since that time formed the deep foundations, *non tangenda non movenda*, of the Scottish criminal jurisprudence.*

The humanity of the present times has long and energetically contended with the natural apprehensions of the English lawyers and judges, to give the right of being defended by counsel to prisoners charged with felony. It is singular that this privilege, often of vital importance in doubtful cases, has been established for nearly three centuries in the Scottish law ; and that by special statute, not only is the accused in all cases entitled to be heard at full length by counsel on the evidence, and to have the last word in the debate, but in the event of his being unable, or having neglected to fee counsel for himself, the judge is enjoined to assign him counsel, and it is illegal to proceed to the trial of a prisoner unless he is so protected.† Great apprehensions are expressed in England lest the introduction of a similar privilege should protract, to an unreasonable and intolerable length, the already burdensome sittings of their assizes ; but no such inconvenience has been experienced in Scotland, where, in consequence of the efforts made by counsel to abridge the proceedings in cases where the evidence is clear, criminal justice is, upon the whole, administered just as rapidly as in England ; while, at the same time, in those cases where the guilt of the accused is really doubtful, the pleading of his counsel is often of decisive weight in establishing his innocence.

The oppression of the poor, by the litigious efforts of the rich, has in every age been the favourite subject of fervent, and too often just declamation, by the friends of freedom. Much has been done, and still more attempted, in England, to obviate this evil ; but nothing more effectual than has for two centuries been established in every court in Scotland, where the poorest suitors, by being placed on what is called the poor's-roll, are enabled to maintain even a protracted suit with the most powerful and wealthy opponent.‡ As

* By Regulations 1672.

† By Act 1579, c. 62.

‡ By Act 1663, c. 7.

matters at present stand, the only doubt is, whether this favour to the poor is not carried too far, and whether those who appear in courts *in formâ pauperum*, having nothing to lose, do not possess an undue, and often oppressive advantage, in a question with those who are not exempted from that liability.

The Scotch system of banking, the security of which was completely proved in the great commercial panic of 1825, and the important effects of which are apparent in the unexampled strides which North Britain has made in wealth and prosperity during the last century, has now become the general object of interest and attention in the southern part of the island ; and various attempts have been made to establish joint-stock companies, on similar principles, for the wider extension of the benefits of banking among the vast commercial classes of England. It was by an act of the Scottish Parliament that the foundation of this admirable system was laid ;* and it was before the Union, that two of the most opulent and prosperous of our banking establishments, the Bank of Scotland and the firm now called Sir William Forbes and Company, were set on foot ; while it is by the steady adherence of the Scottish courts to the principle of their common law, that the private funds of the partners, including their landed estates, are liable universally for the debts of the firm, that the whole stability and security of that important but perilous branch of national commerce has been established.

It is within these few years only that the humanity of the Legislature has interposed in England in favour of that unfortunate class of persons, *insolvent debtors* ; but the Scottish legislature, a hundred and forty years ago, gave them, by the right of applying for a *cessio bonorum*, or transference of their goods without reserve to their creditors, a complete protection against the hardship of imprisonment, except in those cases where the fraudulent concealment of funds called for the application of that severity.† The effect of this happy measure, originally devised by the wisdom, or sympathy with insolvents, of Julius Cæsar, has been such, that the dreadful evils of prolonged incarceration,

* 1696, c. 18.

† By Acts of Sederunt, Feb. 8, 1688 ; Dec. 1, 1685 ; and July 18, 1688.

so well known and so much the object of dread in England, have been for a century and a half unknown in the northern part of the island ; and few debtors are confined above six weeks, excepting in those cases where their fraudulent conduct obviously calls for the application of that severe remedy.

Not content with this great concession to unfortunate debtors, the Scottish Parliament, by a statute in the same year,* established what is called the *Act of Grace*, whereby a debtor, who is unable to aliment himself in jail, is entitled to apply to the magistrates, keepers of the prison, to have a certain weekly allowance, adequate to his maintenance, assigned to him, at the expense of the creditor who lodged him in prison.† The effect of this humane regulation has been not only to hinder the starvation of prisoners for civil debts in jail, but in a great degree to prevent that ruinous accumulation of claims against them in the name of *jail fees*, which have long been the cause of the confinement of above half the debtors in England ; and by the burdensome payment to the creditors with which it is attended, to diminish very much, indeed, the duration of imprisonment in those cases where the debtor was unable or unwilling to obtain the benefit of liberation by a *cessio bonorum*.

The introduction of the retrospective period in bankruptcy, which England owes to the enlightened experience of Sir Samuel Romilly, is justly regarded as one of the greatest improvements in her bankrupt law, and has done more to check the frauds of insolvent traders than any other enactment since the first introduction of that system. But the provisions of his act are nothing but a copy of the act passed by the Scottish Parliament above a century before ;‡ which, with a prophetic wisdom most remarkable, adopted, in 1696, those very provisions against the fraudulent alienations of property on the eve of bankruptcy, which the wider commerce and more extensive commercial experience of England only suggested for adoption a century afterwards.

Protection to the cultivator against the oppression of his landlord, or the prejudicial effects of a change of proprietors, is one of the great objects of civil government ; and it is

* By 1696, c. 9.

† 1696, c. 32.

‡ 1696, c. 5.

justly remarked by Mr Hume, as a decisive proof of the slow progress of general freedom even in England, its favoured abode, that a few provisions for the protection of their plough-goods are all that is to be found in Magna Charta itself in favour of that important body of men, the rural cultivators. But in Scotland, full and absolute protection was secured to this most important class four hundred years ago, by a statute passed, as its preamble bears, for the protection "of the puir folk that labour the ground." This act was so important in its operation, and so effectual in its protection, that Adam Smith remarks that it is of itself sufficient, by having laid the foundation of *leases*, to account for all the subsequent agricultural prosperity of Scotland.*

The agricultural industry of Ireland, till within these few years, has been perpetually blighted by the ruinous privilege which the landlords of that country enjoyed of distraining any of the numerous subtenants on their land, not merely for the rent due by that subtenant to the superior from whom he held, but for the arrears of rent, how great soever, interposed between them and the owner of the soil. This right, in its application to a country where subtenants were universal, and four or five hands were frequently interposed between the landlord and the cultivator of the soil, was obviously utterly destructive of agricultural capital, and a complete bar to its growth; and it may be doubted whether the legislation of late years has provided an adequate remedy for this enormous evil. But that which the British Parliament, in the nineteenth century, has hardly been able to accomplish, was completely effected in the sixteenth, in regard to feu-holdings, or rights of property, by the Scottish Legislature, by a statute which enacted that, when the vassal has paid his dues to his immediate superior, he shall be free of all claim at the instance of the overlord:† an enactment which speedily led to a similar rule being adopted by the courts of law, in the case of subtenants brought on the land with the consent of the landlord; and has completely freed Scotland from all the evils arising from the distraining of a subtenant for the arrears of rent due by a

* 1449, c. 7.

† 1561, c. 21.

tenant-in-chief, which have so long and so justly been complained of in the sister island.

The corruption of the blood of a person attainted for high treason, that last and most unjust consequence of a conviction for that offence by the English law, which extends the consequence of crime to distant generations, by "damming up and rendering utterly impervious," in the quaint language of their lawyers, the channels by which inheritable blood is transmitted by a traitor to his descendants, never was known in Scotland; and, in the worst times, a son might, by the law of that country, succeed to the estate of a father who had been convicted and suffered death for high treason. The consequences of such an attainder were only the forfeiture of what they called the movable estate—in other words, the goods and chattels of the traitor, and the liferent of his heritage; but no forfeiture of the land itself, either to the injured sovereign or the overlord of the fee.

It is a *questio vexata* in England, whether the registration acts recently brought forward in Parliament by Government are, or are not, calculated to benefit the country; but no one entertains a doubt that, if a proper system of registering titles and deeds in local courts could be devised, without the great evils of centralising everything in London, which Lord Brougham's bills were obviously calculated to produce, it would be a very great public benefit. This problem, the difficulty of which has occasioned the stoppage of the measure at present in Parliament, was completely solved two hundred and twenty years ago by the enactments of the Scottish Legislature,* which established a system of registration, partly in the Sheriff and Burgh Courts in the provinces, partly in the records of the Supreme Court at Edinburgh, which has so happily combined the great object of security and publicity to the titles and burdens of estates, with a due regard to local interests, and the convenience of persons having a right in the deeds to be registered, that for the two centuries it has been in operation no complaint whatever has been heard, either against its efficiency and utility as a system of regis-

* By Acts 1617, c. 16; 1681, c. 11; 1686, c. 19; 1693, c. 13; and 1696, c. 18.

tration, or its undue tendency to monopolise in the capital the business of the provinces.

A commission has long been sitting in England to introduce a thorough simplification and amendment in their law of real property—a department of jurisprudence which, with them, has grown into so complicated a form that it has become the herculean labour of a separate branch of the profession to master it; and more than one Lord Chancellor of England has declared that it is next to impossible to frame a title to an estate to which an astute attorney will not be able to state a valid objection. In Scotland, a variety of statutory enactments, too numerous to be quoted,* have introduced, between two and three hundred years ago, a system of conveyancing which, without being perfect, is yet so comparatively simple and secure, that no similar complaints have in the lapse of time been brought against it; and vast sums are daily transmitted from London for the sake of the safer investment which the Scottish heritable bonds and titles afford to the English mortgages or conveyances to landed property.

It was the boast of Alfred that he had brought justice to every man's door, by the establishment of a circuit perambulating the kingdom, and holding courts in every county which it contains. The progress of time, however, and the immense accumulation of business in the principal counties, have contributed to render abortive the benevolent designs of that immortal sovereign; and bills have repeatedly been introduced into Parliament by the present Government with a view to obviate the evil, and afford, by the aid of local courts, that practical facility to the trying of questions of man and man, which in England has long existed only in the eloquent periods of Blackstone and Delolme. That which England, however, has not yet attained, Scotland, under the institution of its old Parliament, has enjoyed for four centuries. Its Sheriff-courts have, from the earliest period, afforded a practical proof of the possibility of bringing justice expeditiously and cheaply to every man's door; and of the economical and yet effective manner in which this duty has been discharged by those valuable local courts,

* Particularly 1681, c. 18; 1549, c. 16, &c.

which exercise jurisdiction in all cases of personal contract, or disputes about movable funds or debts to any amount, no better proof can be desired than was furnished by the late Parliamentary returns, which showed that *twenty thousand* causes were annually determined in these inferior tribunals, at an average cost to the suitors of ten or twelve pounds each in litigated cases, and two or three in those which are undefended; while such was the confidence in the judgments given, that one only out of *one hundred and thirteen* is carried by appeal to a superior tribunal.*

Since the attention of the English has been strongly turned to the amendment of their criminal jurisprudence, the importance of a public officer to conduct prosecutions for crimes, at the national expense, has been strongly felt; and it is understood that Sir Robert Peel, among other salutary practical improvements which he had in view in the Home Office, was preparing a plan for the gradual transference of the right of prosecution from individuals to a public officer, who might at once relieve injured parties of that vexatious and often oppressive burden, and introduce greater certainty and equity into this important branch of government than it could possibly attain while still subject to the passions or the caprice of private individuals. That great and really useful reform, however, is still unaccomplished, and England as yet labours under the uncertainty and the expense of private prosecutions. Whereas Scotland, from the very infancy of her jurisprudence, has been familiar with the institution of a public prosecutor, under the name of Lord Advocate, who, without legally excluding private prosecutions, if the injured party prefers proceeding at his own instance, has practically superseded them, from the superior skill and success with which the proceedings are conducted at the public expense, than they possibly could in the hands and with the funds of private individuals. Of the good effect of this great institution, decisive evidence is preserved in the facts which the Parliamentary returns of 1832 have brought to light, that, while the convictions are

* The civil cases now (1850) annually brought into the ordinary and summary courts of Lanarkshire alone exceed 6000; and the small-debt cases, or cases below £8, 6s. 8d., in the same county, are upwards of 15,000 annually. Of all these cases, not above twenty or thirty are annually taken to the superior courts by appeal.

to the acquittals, by the grand or petit jury, on an average of all England, as two to one, they are in Scotland as eight to one.*

In England the principle has long prevailed, that a creditor who proceeds against the person of his debtor has made his election to abandon his estate; and landed property, till the time of Sir Samuel Romilly, was not liable to execution for civil debts, unless judgment had been recovered, and the debt rendered special on the land during the lifetime of the debtor; so that a bankrupt who got the start of his creditors might cut his throat, and leave £20,000 a-year secure and unburdened to his heirs. In Scotland, notwithstanding the severity of the feudal institutions, of which we have heard so much, the execution against land for civil debts has, from the earliest times, been comparatively unfettered. Originally, and down to the end of the thirteenth century, the same summary process lay open to a creditor for attaching the land as the movable goods of his debtor; and although the influence of the nobles struggled hard, in later times, to throw obstacles in the way of the seizure of their estates for civil debts, yet they did so with so little success, and the wisdom of the Scottish Parliament interposed so effectually to preserve open the access of creditors to the estates of their debtors, that the balance was turned the other way; and the injustice done for centuries was the undue power afforded to creditors of carrying off great landed estates for inconsiderable money debts—a power to the use and abuse of which many of the greatest estates now existing in Scotland owe their origin. Repeated statutes have been passed to check this abuse,† and at length the principles of a just accounting between debtor and creditor were established, and as much land allowed to be attached only as was equivalent to the amount of the debt; but no fetters upon the execution against real estates ever existed similar to those so much complained of in the neighbouring part of the island, and land lay always as much exposed to the process of creditors in the person of the heir as it was in that of his predecessor; nay, in some cases, by special statute, a preference was given, a hundred and seventy

* *Parl. Returns*, 7th March 1833, and 14th March 1833.

† Statutes 1549, 1617, 1663, 1672.

years ago, to the creditors of the ancestor over those of the heir.*

We could easily extend this enumeration to double its present length, without exhausting the evidence which the Scottish Parliament have left, in their legislative measures, of the admirable political wisdom and truly independent spirit by which they were actuated.† Enough—and, perhaps, our Southern readers may think more than enough—has already been done to establish their just claim to the character of free, just, and upright legislators. We shall only therefore add, what is perhaps the most surprising matter of all, and what the English lawyers, accustomed to the *multorum camelorum onus* of their statutory law, will fully appreciate, that such was the laudable brevity of those ancient times, that the whole Scottish acts of Parliament, down to the Union are contained in *three duodecimo volumes*. And yet, in these little volumes, we hesitate not to say, is to be found more of the spirit of real freedom, more wise resolution and practically beneficial legislation, better provisions for the liberty of the subject, and a more equitable settlement of all the objects of the popular party at this time, than is to be found in the whole thirty quarto volumes of the statutes at large, and all the efforts of English freedom, from Magna Charta to the Reform Bill.

From the preceding enumeration, imperfect as it will appear to all persons acquainted with Scottish jurisprudence, it is evident that the wisdom and public spirit of the Scottish Parliament, anterior to the Union, had not only procured for the people of Scotland all the elements of real freedom, but had effected a settlement on the most secure and equitable basis of all the great questions which it is the professed object of the Liberal party to resolve in a satisfactory manner at this time. It appears that, above two hundred years ago, the Scottish Parliament had not only effected a settlement, on the most equitable footing, of the

* By 1663, c. 21.

† Another instance of the adoption of the Scotch law principles, since this essay was written, has occurred in regard to actions of filiation, and for the aliment of bastard children, in regard to which Sir James Graham, as Home Secretary, openly stated in Parliament, in legislating on the subject, that he proposed to adopt the principle of the Scotch law, that to make out a bastardy claim, the mother, in addition to her own oath, must produce reasonable proof inferring paternity against the defendant.

difficult and complicated tithe question, so as to relieve entirely the cultivators of that burden, but established an admirable system of poor laws, the efficacy and security of which have been proved by the experience of two centuries, till they were obliterated by the decisions of the Court of Session ; provided an effectual remedy against the evils of arbitrary or illegal imprisonment ; established a complete and universal system of public instruction ; introduced a humane but effective system of criminal law ; given to the meanest prisoner, charged with an ordinary offence, the same privileges which the English law concedes only to state offenders accused of high treason ; awarded to all prisoners the right of being defended by counsel, and heard by them upon the evidence ; provided for the protection of the poor in litigation against the rich ; laid the foundations of an admirable system of banking, the security and benefits of which subsequent experience has abundantly verified ; afforded a humane relief to insolvent debtors, so as to check completely the evils of prolonged imprisonment ; extended their care even to the aliment of poor prisoners in jail unable to provide for themselves ; established that retrospective period in bankruptcy which English wisdom did not adopt for a century afterwards ; given absolute security to the cultivators of the soil in the enjoyment of their leasehold rights ; effectually prevented the oppression of the husbandman by the exactions of middlemen, or the distraining for more than their own rents by the owner of the soil ; never admitted the hideous injustice arising from the corruption of the blood in cases of high treason, but limited the punishment to the person and movable estate of the transgressor ; established an admirable and universal system of registration for all titles and mortgages relating to real property ; introduced a lucid and intelligible system for the conveyance of landed estates, and the burdens created thereon ; brought cheap justice home to every man's door by an unexceptionable system of local courts ; provided for the just and effectual prosecution of crimes by the establishment of a public officer intrusted with the discharge of that important function ; given a comparatively ready access to creditors against the real estates of their debtors, and allowed execution to proceed at once against the person and estate of the debtor.

Whether these were important objects to have been gained, great and glorious attempts to have been made by the Parliament of a remote, inconsiderable, and distracted kingdom, during the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, we leave it to our readers to judge ; but this we will affirm, that if they were not, then is the whole Liberal party of Great Britain at fault, and wandering in the dark at the present time ; for almost the whole objects, for the acquisition of which they profess such anxiety in England in the middle of the nineteenth century, were secured for Scotland by her native legislature before the end of the seventeenth. If the English legislators shall continue a course of wise and practical legal improvement, they will perhaps obtain, by the year 1900, most of those advantages which the old Scottish Parliament had secured for their country two centuries before.

And it is a people who have done SUCH THINGS for the cause of national independence and civil liberty who are styled, by the modern legislators of Scotland, as having been “destitute in every age of the spirit of Freedom !” It is a constitution which has produced a legislature that has done SO MUCH for the cause of real freedom, that it is the boast of our modern reformers “to have torn to threads and patches ; not to have left a rag or a vestige remaining !” We have only to hope that the reformed legislature of Scotland may do one-tenth as much for the cause of real liberty as the unreformed one has done ; and that our descendants, a hundred years hereafter, may find themselves in possession of all the rights and privileges, and as secure in their enjoyment, as we were when the mighty change was effected.

And let not our Southern readers be carried away by the sophism, so frequently employed by persons ignorant or desirous to conceal the truth on the subject, that Scotland has thriven, not from any efforts of its native legislature, but from the influence of British freedom. We wish to be just ; we acknowledge with gratitude the great benefits which Scotland has derived from the Union ; we are thankful for the cessation of internal British war, and feel the full advantages which have resulted from the opening of the English market, the stimulating influence of British capital, and the generous gift of British treasures. We are proud of our

connection with the great and glorious realm of England, and trust we have not disgraced it either in the field of battle or the walks of literature. But when we turn to the Statute-book, and examine what improvement the *laws of Scotland* have received from the Union, we are constrained to admit that Scotland hardly received any legislative amelioration during the whole of the eighteenth century, with the exception of the act abolishing ward holdings and heritable jurisdictions, in 1746 ; and that was not conferred by the benevolence of English wisdom, but extorted by the terrors of the Highland broadsword. The vast improvements in our criminal practice which have taken place within the last twenty years, were not owing to any admixture of English legislation, but to the admirable wisdom and experienced sagacity of Sir William Rae, the Scotch Lord Advocate, who followed out solely and exclusively the principles of Scotch jurisprudence. Four great *changes* only of late years, we admit, are of English origin. The Reform Bill, the Burgh Reform, the Introduction of Trial by Jury in *civil* causes—for it had existed from the earliest period in this country in criminal—and the immense change in legal forms introduced by the Judicature Act. Whether they are *improvements* or not, time alone can show, and a half century will not enable the nation to determine with accuracy. But so far as experience has hitherto gone, we believe there are few Scotchmen, even of the Reform party, capable of judging on the subjects, who do not already secretly regret our ancient institutions, and the hands in which political influence was placed by our original constitution.*

And if Scotland has prospered solely in consequence of the external influence of England, and in spite of the tyranny and selfishness of its native legislature, how, we would ask, has the same influence proved so destructive to Ireland ? When we turn to that country, we hear nothing from the Liberal party but vituperation and abuse of the cruelty, injustice, and tyranny of England ; the whole

* These anticipations have already been realised. That able and enlightened public officer, the present Lord Advocate, (Rutherford,) whom I am proud to call my friend, has introduced into Parliament in this session a bill, with the entire concurrence of the whole country, the object of which is to provide for litigants an escape from the experienced evils of jury trial, by enabling them to select the trial of the judge or arbiters in preference ; and to remedy the numerous defects in the Judicature Act in the Court of Session. (Note, May 1850.)

wretchedness, crimes, and suffering of its unhappy people are, without hesitation, ascribed by the whole Whigs and Radicals to the blasting influence of English ascendancy ; but yet that same ascendancy, we are told by the same party, was the sole cause of the prosperity of Scotland, and, despite the tyranny of its native rulers, overspread the land with plenteousness. Will they be so good as to tell us how the same foreign ascendancy, which to Ireland was the simoom of the desert, has proved to Scotland only the zephyr of spring ? Will they explain how it happened that the English statesmen lavished their wisdom on Scotland, during the seventeenth century, to the exclusion of their *native country* ; and that no traces in the English Statute-book were to be found of those admirable principles of legislation which for two centuries have been established in Scotland, till the days of Sir Samuel Romilly and Mr Brougham ? Will the numerous foreign and domestic vituperators of the old Scottish institutions be kind enough to point out the English model from which any of the admirable ancient Scottish statutes we have mentioned were taken, or specify the name of the English monarch, minister, or legislator, whose influence or authority procured the enacting in its native Parliaments of any one of these truly wonderful laws ? They cannot—we defy them to point out the slightest trace of English influence or example in any of these monuments of native wisdom ; and, in fact, before the union of the crowns, the Scottish Parliament were so thoroughly exasperated against their southern neighbours, that it would have been sufficient to insure the rejection of any measure, that it had been supposed to have emanated from English influence ; and after that event, till the union of the kingdoms, the inhabitants of South Britain were too much occupied by their intestine quarrels to have any time to bestow a thought on their savage neighbours to the north of the Tweed, except as to sowing the seeds of dissension or corruption among their nobles—a mode of government in which they were for long but too successful.

In truth, the early precocity of Scotland in legislative wisdom, and the extraordinary provisions made by its native Parliaments in remote periods, not only for the wellbeing of the people, but the coercion alike of regal tyranny and

aristocratic oppression, and the *instruction, relief, and security of the poorer classes*, is one of the most remarkable facts in the whole history of modern Europe, and one well deserving of the special attention of historians and statesmen, both in that and the neighbouring country. When we recollect what was the state of that remote and sterile kingdom in the four centuries preceding the Union, during which these extraordinary monuments of legislative wisdom were erected; when we remember that for the first two centuries of that period it was lacerated by an almost incessant warfare for its national independence, invaded twenty times by immense foreign armies, repeatedly pierced to the heart by foreign power, and plundered and devastated everywhere by foreign bands; when we call to mind that during this constant and grinding military exertion its fields were perpetually laid waste, its cities burned, its merchant vessels captured, and the seeds equally of agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial prosperity, nipped in the bud; when we observe that during the two next centuries, when the English had abandoned their attempts to conquer the kingdom by main force, they had constant recourse to the still more disastrous method of management which consisted in the corruption and division of the nobles, and that, by the continual application of that potent engine, the integrity of a great portion of the aristocracy was totally destroyed, and the nation kept in a perpetual state of feudal disorder—from which no one derived benefit but the arch-fiends who put their base and selfish passions in motion—we are lost in astonishment at the laws which were framed during such periods of anarchy, and the noble principles of legislation adopted by a people too often, to appearance, occupied only with the wretched and distracting objects of individual ambition.

The ordinary attempts to account for the wonder by the influence of France, the authority of the civil law, and the institution of the “Lords of the Articles,” as they were termed, or committee of Parliament, intrusted with the preparation of all legislative measures, though not destitute of influence, are obviously inadequate to explain its occurrence. For who poured wisdom into the minds of the Lords of the Articles? Who filled the barons of a remote, poor, and

half-savage state with ideas of legislative protection to the labouring classes, and political wisdom, which did not appear even in the favoured soil of South Britain for centuries after? Who taught that rude and illiterate people what to adopt, and what reject, out of the immense mass of the civil law? And where shall we find in the institutions of the old French monarchy anything like the benevolent wisdom, regard for the poor and destitute, and bulwarks of freedom, which are the glorious characteristics of the old Scottish statutes? It belongs to the historian of Scotland to point out the causes to which this extraordinary fact has been owing; but we cannot refrain from hinting at our own opinions on the subject. The solution of the phenomenon, we conceive, is to be found, 1. In the long, heroic, and persevering struggle which the Scotch made for their national independence—an effort which, like the successful combat with adversity in an individual, developed many of the most valuable qualities of national character. 2. In the strong and deep hold which the Reformation took of the people, and the boundless extrication of thought, and dispelling of prejudice, which in consequence ensued, during the last half of the sixteenth and the whole of the seventeenth century. 3. In the fortunate constitution of the national Parliament, which gave a full and fair representation to the whole property of the nation, and entirely excluded that selfish and partial legislation which never fails to follow the ascendancy of mere numbers. Already we see the Liberal party holding up their hands in derision; but before we are done with this subject, or the nation is fully enlightened by experience on the subject, we are much mistaken if we do not advance much which will shake the opinions of all candid men, even on the Reform side.

SHIPS, COLONIES, AND COMMERCE*

MY LORD PROVOST AND GENTLEMEN,—Great as is the satisfaction with which on all occasions I meet my fellow-citizens, and warm as is the gratitude which I feel for the kindness with which they receive me, I can safely affirm that I never experienced either in so strong a degree as I do at this moment. We are now assembled to commemorate one of the most interesting events in the history of our country—the colonisation of a new and highly important island in the southern hemisphere, and the spread of the British race in the vast archipelago of the East. If anything could add to the satisfaction which I feel in being present on such an occasion, it is the toast which your kindness has intrusted to me, and its singular connexion with the time in which I now address you. Four-and-thirty years have elapsed this day—on the 20th October 1805—since the conqueror of continental Europe stood on the heights of Ulm, to behold the captive army of Germany defile before him. When every head around him swam with the giddy intoxication of the spectacle ; while every eye in the vanquished thousands who crowded past was turned with involuntary homage towards the hero who had filled the world with his renown ; the steady mind of Napoleon regarded only the future ; and discerning through the blaze of present glory, the shadow of coming events, he said to those around him —“ Gentlemen, this is all well ; but I want greater things than these ; I want ships, colonies, and commerce.” On the day after these memorable words were spoken—on the

* Speech delivered at a dinner given in Glasgow on the 20th October 1839 to the first colonists who left the Clyde for New Zealand, in the vessel “Tory.”

21st October 1805—the combined fleets of France and Spain were destroyed at Trafalgar by the arm of Nelson, and a few dismasted hulls, riddled with shot, alone remained of the vast armament which had so recently threatened the British empire, to carry the tale of woe to the vanquished; and “ships, colonies, and commerce” had irrevocably passed into the hands of their enemies. We now see the fruits of that mighty victory; we behold the British race peopling alike the western and the southern hemispheres, and can already anticipate the time when two hundred millions of men on the shores of the Atlantic, and in the isles of the Pacific, will be speaking our language, reading our authors, glorying in our descent. Who is there that does not see in these marvellous events the finger of Providence; or can avoid the conclusion that the British race is indeed the chosen instrument for mighty things, and that to it is given to spread the blessings of civilisation and the light of religion, as far as the waters of the ocean extend? I will not attempt to describe the favoured land to which the colonists now assembled with us at this festive board are so soon to wend their way. I will not speak of its shady forests or its noble harbours, its tempered climate or its fertile soil; its snowy ridges rivalling the Alps in elevation, its perennial rivers equalling our own mountain streams in sweetness. It has many of the capabilities and features of our land; its deeply indented and rocky shores, its isles far stretching into the main; its soil teeming with coal and metallic riches; its torrents affording an inexhaustible supply of water-power for machinery. But it enjoys a very different climate. A perpetual spring fans its sunny slopes, protected by a vast interior range of mountains and encircling ocean, alike from the shivering blasts of winter, and the scorching heats of summer. Snow is never seen in its valleys; drought is never experienced on its hills. No one can doubt from its physical situation, natural advantages, and close proximity to the great continent of Australia, that it is destined to become, at no distant period, the Great Britain of the southern hemisphere. It may with confidence be anticipated, that the incalculable advantages of colonising such a land will speedily force themselves on the attention of Government; that the intrepid colonists now assembled with

us who have preceded our rulers in the march of civilisation, will obtain the blessings of a regular government ; and that, ere long, they will find themselves under the safeguard of English law, and the protection of the British name. But even if we should be disappointed in this hope, I do not despair : I have no fear for the Anglo-Saxon race, though thrown without natural rulers into the wilderness of Nature. Go where they will, they cannot settle without having the English speech on their tongue, and the English spirit in their hearts ; without the energy of freedom in their character, and the wisdom of experience in their recollection ; without the Bible in their hand and the axe by their side ; without the power of European art at their command, and the blessings of Christian civilisation in their train. I will not weaken by attempting to recapitulate the magnificent prospects which have been opened on this subject by my Reverend and eloquent friend Dr Macleod. What I am particularly desirous of impressing upon you is, that in executing this mission, you are not less consulting your interest than performing your duty ; and that however dark and threatening in many respects may be the future prospects of the British Empire, a certain remedy, and perhaps the only remedy for them all, is to be found in the intrepid and steady discharge of that great task to which you have been called by the Ruler of the Universe. The facts which I am now about to lay before you, may by many be regarded as of a discouraging character ; and I would hesitate to bring them forward, if I did not know that I am addressing an assembly of men, whose knowledge, intelligence, and experience must long ago have made them aware, that with such facts is wound up the future fate of themselves and their children ; and if I did not feel convinced, from the bottom of my heart, that in the steady consideration of these, and the persevering encouragement of enterprises such as the present, is to be found the means of obviating all our difficulties,—the sheet-anchor of the British empire. Standing as I do, in the midst of this great commercial city, second to none, after the metropolis, in the British empire, I need not say that we are people mainly dependant on commerce and maritime strength ; and we have only to look around us, and contemplate the narrow extent of these

islands compared with the vast population already crowded within their shores, to feel convinced that any serious and permanent obstruction to our foreign commerce, or decline in our maritime power, would not only be attended with the greatest danger to our independence, but fraught with a degree of widespread misery, perhaps unparalleled even in the long annals of human suffering. But, when we minutely examine our maritime and commercial situation, we shall find many causes for serious alarm, and many reasons for concluding that our policy in these respects has hitherto been mainly directed to fruitless or unattainable objects ; and that, in their prosecution, we have overlooked or neglected the certain elements of strength lying in our own bosom, in the growth of our colonial empire. If we look to our exports and tonnage returns, we shall see that our maritime resources for the last forty years have been far from keeping pace with our commercial growth, and that our exports to the countries whom we have made the greatest sacrifices to propitiate, have been constantly and rapidly declining, while those to our colonies, for whose interests we have done so little, have been as constantly and rapidly increasing ; and that it is the growth of the latter which has concealed and counterbalanced the decay of the former. Let us look at our total exports, imports, and tonnage in the present time, as compared with what they were during the peace of Amiens. They stand as follows :—

	Exports.	Imports.	Tonnage.
1802,.....	£38,309,980	£29,826,210	2,167,000
1838,.....	105,170,549	61,268,320	2,890,601

Thus, you see that while from 1802 to 1838—that is, in six-and-thirty years—our exports have advanced from 38 to 105, (that is, about 280 per cent,) and our imports from 29 to 61, (that is, about 210 per cent,) our whole tonnage has only increased from 21 to 28, (that is, about 33 per cent.) This broad and decisive fact is calculated to excite the most serious alarm in every rational bosom, as to the maintenance in future of the maritime superiority of Great Britain. For who has carried the remainder of our merchandise abroad, and wafted the remainder of our imports to our shores ? Somebody must have done it. The conclusion is unavoidable, that it was done in great part by *Foreign States* ; that is, by

vessels and seamen that may any day be ranged against us by our enemies. And the number of these foreign seamen and vessels now employed in the British trade, and the rapid encroachments they are making on British maritime strength, is decisively proved by the Parliamentary Tables collected with so much care and accuracy by Mr Porter at the Board of Trade: for from them it appears that the relative proportions of Foreign and British shipping employed in conducting our trade at these two periods were as follows:—

	British and Irish.			Foreign.	
	Vessels.	Tons.		Vessels.	Tons.
1802,.....	7,806	1,333,005		3,728	480,251
1838,.....	16,119	2,785,387		8,679	1,211,066

Thus, while the British tonnage in the last thirty-six years has advanced from 13 to 27—that is, somewhat more than *doubled*—the foreign employed in conducting our trade have advanced from 48 to 121; that is, nearly *tripled*. This is the general result; and unquestionably it is sufficiently alarming to every one who considers how essential our maritime superiority is to our foreign commerce; and what would be the condition of the British population if the empire of the seas were wrested from it, and the Thames, the Clyde, and the Mersey were blockaded by hostile fleets. But the particulars of our trade with separate countries are far more instructive, because they demonstrate, in the clearest manner, where it is that the decay of our trade and shipping is going on, and where the counterpoising sources of strength and revival are to be found. It appears from Mr Porter's Parliamentary Tables, that, since 1823, when the reciprocity system commenced, our tonnage with the countries with whom the reciprocity treaties were concluded has been decreasing in the most alarming manner, while no increase whatever has taken place during the same period in the amount of the goods which they take off our hands. The British and Foreign shipping employed in the trade with Prussia, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, since 1820, has stood as follows:—

British declined with Prussia from 539 ships to 270					
...	Denmark,	57	...	16	
...	Norway,	168	...	15	
...	Sweden,	123	...	66	

And the foreign ships with Great Britain have increased during the same period in these states as follows:—

Prussia with Great Britain	increased from 258 to 903
... Danish	... 44 to 624
... Norwegian	... 558 to 785
... Swedish	... 71 to 250

Such is the working of the reciprocity system with these countries; and even in regard to America our trade stands thus:—

British.		American.	
Ships.	Tons.	Ships.	Tons.
1836,.....226	86,383	524	226,483

Thus you see, that while our commerce with Northern Europe is almost entirely passing into the hands of foreigners, nearly three-fourths of that with America is at this moment in the hands of the inhabitants of that country! It is easy to see that if we had no commercial intercourse but with such foreign and independent states, we should, by the very extension of our export of manufactures, be nursing up a foreign, and possibly hostile, commercial navy, which would ere long wrest from us the empire of the seas. It is needless to go farther into details, for Mr Porter tells us that the following is the general result of the change which the tonnage of our foreign commerce with all parts of the world has undergone during the last thirty-six years:—

The trade of Great Britain with all Europe has declined, from 1802 to 1836, from . . .	65 to 48 per cent.
With British Colonies in America, increased from	18 to 26 ...
With United American States, ..	6 to 9 ...
With India,	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ to 5 ...

But perhaps it will be said, that the vast increase of the export of British manufactures to these old commercial states has more than counterbalanced the rapid decay of British tonnage in our intercourse with them. Let us examine how this stands. It appears from Mr Porter's valuable work on the Progress of the Nation, that our total exports to Europe, which in the year 1815 amounted to £20,635,244, had sunk in the year 1836 to £19,021,066; and our exports to Northern Europe, which in the former year amounted to £11,971,692, in the latter, notwithstand-

ing its extraordinary commercial activity, had sunk to £9,999,861. And the general result of thirty years preceding 1830 is thus summed up by Mr Porter:—"The average annual exports of British produce and manufactures in the decennary period from 1801 to 1810 amounted to £40,737,970. In the next ten years, from 1811 to 1820, the annual average was £41,484,461; from 1821 to 1830 the annual average fell to £36,597,623." And if we turn to the amount of our trade to the principal countries of Continental Europe, we shall see at once how very inconsiderable is that traffic, and how miserable the interest of the trade, in connexion with these countries, for which we have so long sacrificed the care of our own colonies. You will be surprised at the smallness of our exports to these nations; but they stood in 1836, that year of unparalleled commercial activity, as follows:—

	Real value.
Russia,	£1,742,433
Sweden,	113,308
Norway,	79,469
Denmark,	91,302
Prussia,	160,722
France,	1,591,381
Portugal,	1,089,934
Spain,	470,076
Germany,	4,763,729
Belgium,	839,276

I will not fatigue you with farther details. You see here the astonishing facts that France, with its 32,000,000 of inhabitants, takes off only £1,500,000; that Prussia, with a population of 14,000,000, takes off only £160,000 worth; and, most marvellous of all, that Russia, now with a population of 60,000,000, takes only £1,700,000 of our produce. From these facts we may estimate, with perfect certainty, the chance which Great Britain has of being able to maintain a lucrative commercial intercourse with the old European nations in the same stage of civilisation with herself, and influenced by the political hostility and commercial rivalry incident to their political situation. I have said, however gloomy the prospects of our commercial interests with such states may be, there is not only hope but confidence to be derived from another quarter; and if we turn to the colonies we shall at once see whence it is that Eng-

land is now deriving its heart's blood, and from what commercial intercourse our wealth and greatness in future times is to be derived. You will be astonished, your hearts will exult at the magnitude of the Returns which I am now to lay before you. In the year 1836, it appears that our

	Real Value.
Exports to the United States of America were no less than	£12,425,605
British North American Colonies,	2,732,291
British West Indies,	3,786,453
Australian Colonies,	1,180,000
East Indies,	4,285,829

The articulate returns of the trade of each country for the years 1837 and 1838 have not yet been laid before the public ; but here is surely enough to excite our wonder and astonishment. You see that Canada, with its population that does not yet reach 1,500,000 souls, takes off no less than £2,800,000 of our produce—or nearly twice as much as Russia, with its population of 60,000,000. You see that the British West India Islands, with a population of about little more than 60,000 white, and 800,000 black inhabitants, consumed in 1836 no less than £3,700,000—or considerably more than twice as much as France, with its population of 32,000,000. And what is most marvellous of all, and comes directly home to the object of this night's festive assembly, the Australian Colonies, with a population scarcely at this moment amounting to 100,000, take off no less than £1,100,000 a-year of produce. Why, I venture to predict, that before the year 1840 the Colonists of New Holland, reinforced as they will be by our friends around us proceeding to New Zealand, will consume more of British produce and manufactures, though they may not number 120,000 souls, than the 60,000,000 of the Muscovite empire. Such is the wonderful difference between the commercial intercourse we can maintain with our own descendants—our own flesh and blood—the Anglo-Saxon race whom we have sent forth to civilise the world—and the inhabitants of foreign states, subjected to the authority of hostile governments, or swayed by the influence of foreign commercial jealousy. I fear you will be fatigued with these details—and I would not venture to go into them if I addressed an assembly of less intelligence than

that in which I am now placed, than which there is none by whom the incalculable importance of these facts is better appreciated, alike from patriotic feeling and private interest. I will conclude, therefore, these dry but momentous details, by mentioning one fact only to show the incalculable importance of Foreign Colonies to the growth and maintenance of our maritime empire. You have already seen how completely our shipping, which trades with Northern Europe, is withering away under the action of the Reciprocity Treaties; and you have seen that it is now little more than a fourth of what it was fifteen years ago; while that of the Baltic Powers trading with us has quadrupled during the same period. But, turn to the Colonies, and you will learn a very different result, and behold with delight a growth of our shipping as extraordinary, as its decline in our intercourse with Europe is serious and alarming. It appears from Mr Porter's Parliamentary Tables, that the increase of our shipping employed between Canada, Australia, and the mother country, has been as follows:—

		Australia. Tons.	Canada. Coasting Trade. Tons.	Canada With Britain. Tons.
1820,	. .	1,291	248,343	343,377
1836,	. .	19,195	609,111	563,224

Thus the astonishing facts are apparent that, in conducting the intercourse between Canada, the West Indies, and the mother country, there has grown up a commercial navy of nearly 1,200,000 tons, of which nearly 600,000 belong to Great Britain, and the remainder to her Transatlantic offspring; while the tonnage with the Australian Colonies has increased in sixteen years, prior to 1836, from 1200 to 20,000, or nearly twenty-fold. When we recollect that the total commercial navy of Great Britain employs only 2,800,000 tons, and that our vast foreign trade with America only employs 88,000 tons of our shipping, the whole remainder being in the hands of the Americans themselves; and that our intercourse with Canada and Australia, the population of which is not 1,600,000, already gives employment to nearly 600,000 tons, or nearly seven times that employed in our whole immense commerce with the United States of America, the vital importance of colonial trade to maritime independence becomes at once apparent. And the general

result of the comparative progress of the vessels belonging to Great Britain, at home and in the Colonies, from 1814 to 1836, is as follows :—

	Great Britain. Tons.	Colonies. Tons.
1814, . . .	2,414,170	202,795
1836, . . .	2,349,749	442,897

Thus you see, that while the shipping of Great Britain and Ireland has declined in the last five-and-twenty years, notwithstanding the prodigious increase of our exports and imports, that employed in conducting the trade with the Colonies has more than doubled. More decisive evidence cannot be imagined of the vital importance of the Colonial trade, not only to our commercial wealth, but to our national existence. And if any one, after the facts that have now been stated, remains blind to our true national interests, and the quarter from which we must look for our wealth, our security, and independence in future times, I say neither will he be converted though one rose from the dead.

It is easy to see to what cause this remarkable decline in our trade with old nations, and this marvellous increase in our commercial intercourse with our own Colonies, are to be ascribed. It is evidently owing to the fact, that these old States are in the same state of civilisation with ourselves, and therefore they are actuated by a natural desire to deal in the same articles, and to manufacture the same produce as ourselves. Are we Cotton Spinners?—so are they. Are we Iron Masters?—so are they. Are we Silk Manufacturers?—so are they. Are we Cutlery and Hardware Merchants?—so are they. Are we Clothiers and Woollen Drapers?—so are they. There is no branch of industry in which we excel, in which they are not all making the greatest and most strenuous, and sometimes successful, efforts to rival and outstrip us. It is in vain that we meet them with the signs of amity, and hold out the olive branch in token of our desire to establish reciprocity treaties on the footing of real mutual advantage. We cannot, by so doing, either shut the eyes of their manufacturers to the danger of British competition, or close the vision of their Governments to the dazzling spectacle of British greatness. They see that we have risen to the summit of

prosperity under the system of protection to domestic industry, and they naturally imagine that it is only by following our example that they can hope to rival our success. It is in vain that we now offer to meet them on a footing of perfect reciprocity. They say—"It is very well for you to throw down the barriers when your superiority in every branch of industry is incontestible. When ours is the same, we will follow your example; in the mean time, you must allow us to imitate the steps which enabled you to reach the elevated position which you now enjoy." It is difficult to see the answer which can be made to such arguments. I am far from blaming the reciprocity system. I admit that it was founded on enlarged and philanthropic views, and that it would be well for mankind if all nations could at once be brought to act upon the same wise and enlightened principles. I say only that experience has now demonstrated that the attempt to introduce that system into the world is, even in the most favourable view, premature, and that, in the attempt to attain it, we have essentially injured our own commercial navy and maritime strength, without having gained so much as one single countervailing commercial advantage. Let us, therefore, no longer strain after the impracticable attempt to disarm the commercial jealousy of the European States, and, boldly looking our situation in the face, direct our main efforts to the strengthening, conciliating, and increasing of our Colonial Empire. There is to be found the bone of our bone, and the flesh of our flesh. There are to be found the true descendants of the Anglo-Saxon race; there the people who, already imbued with our tastes, our habits, our artificial wants, must be chained for centuries to agricultural or pastoral employments, and can obtain only from the mother country the immense amount of manufactured produce which their growing wealth and numbers must require. So strongly am I impressed with these principles—so clearly do I see the future path traced out to England, not less by her duty than her interests, that there is no one circumstance in her present condition, not even those which are most justly considered as pregnant with danger and alarm, that may not be converted into the source of blessings, if a decided and manly course is taken

by the nation and its Government in regard to its colonial interests. Indeed, so clearly does this appear, that one is almost tempted to believe that the manifold political and social evils of our present condition are the scourges intended by Providence to bring us back, by necessity and a sense of our own interests, to those great national duties from which we have so long and so unaccountably swerved. Are we oppressed with a numerous and redundant population? Are we justly apprehensive that a mass of human beings, already consisting of five-and-twenty millions, and multiplying at the rate, it is said, of a thousand souls a-day, will ere long be unable to find subsistence within the narrow space of these Islands? Let us turn to the Colonies, and there we shall find boundless regions capable of maintaining ten times our present population in contentment and affluence, and which require only the surplus arms and mouths of the parent State to be converted into gigantic empires, which, before a century has elapsed, may overshadow the greatness even of European renown. Are we fearful that the increasing manufacturing skill and growing commercial jealousy of the Continental States may gradually shut us out from the European market, and that our millions of manufacturers may find their sources of foreign subsistence fail at a time when all home employments are filled up? Let us turn to the Colonies, and there we shall see empires of gigantic strength rapidly rising to maturity, in which manufacturing establishments cannot for centuries take root, and in which the taste for British manufactures, and the habits of British comfort, are indelibly implanted on the British race. Are we overburdened with the weight of our poor-rates and the multitude of our paupers, and trembling under the effect of the deep-rooted discontent produced in the attempt to withdraw public support from the maintenance of the adult and healthy labourer? Let us find the means of transporting these healthy workmen to our colonial settlements, and we will confer as great a blessing upon them as we will give a relief to the parent State. Are we disquieted by the rapid progress of corruption in our great towns, and alarmed at the enormous mass of female profligacy which, like a gangrene, infests these great marts of pleasure and opulence? Let us look

to the Colonies, and there we shall find States in which the population is advancing with incredible rapidity, but in which the greatest existing evil is, the undue and frightful preponderance of the male sex, and all that is wanting to complete their means of increase is, that the proportion should be righted by the transfer to distant shores of part of the female population which now encumbers the British isles. Are the means to transport these numerous and indigent classes to these distant regions wanting, and has individual emigration hitherto been liable to the reproach that it removes the better class of our citizens who could do for themselves, and leaves the poorest who encumber the land? The British navy lies between, and means exist of transporting, at hardly any expense to the parent State, all that can ever be required of our working population from that part of the empire which they overburden, to that to which they will prove a blessing. I agree with my eloquent and esteemed friend, Dr M'Leod, that it is astonishing the attention of Government has not ere this been turned to this subject. And why, I would ask, may not part at least of the British Navy be constantly employed in transporting emigrants of all classes to our colonial possessions? Why should two hundred and fifty vessels of different sizes, that are now in commission in the British Navy, be employed only in useless parades, when hundreds of thousands on the British shores are pining for the means of transport across the seas, and millions of acres on the other side of the ocean, teeming with verdant fertility, await only their robust hands to be converted into a terrestrial paradise? Why should the British Navy not be employed, like the Roman legions in time of peace, in works of public utility? And why should their efforts not construct causeways across the deep, which would bind together the immense circuit of the British colonial dominions as strongly as the highways constructed by the legions cemented the fabric of their mighty empire? In this view, the last inconvenience attending a redundant pauper population—that of being with difficulty removed—would be converted into an element of national strength, because it would induce all classes cheerfully to acquiesce in the duplication of our Naval force, from which they all derive such obvious advantages; the Navy would augment

in size and grow in usefulness under such a salutary system ; and the very quality which Adam Smith long ago remarked as the greatest obstacle to the improvement of the human race, that of being the lumber which it is of all others the most difficult to transport, would become the means of augmenting the maritime force of England, and strengthening the unseen chain which holds together the far-distant provinces of its mighty dominion.

Powerful as are these considerations, drawn from private interest and public advantage, I feel there are yet greater things than these — that there are higher duties with which man is intrusted, even than those connected with kindred or country ; and that if their due discharge is to be ascertained by statistical details, it is by those which point out the growth of moral and religious improvement, rather than those which measure the increase of commerce and opulence. In contemplating the wonderful progress of mankind in these particulars, my attention was recently attracted by a remarkable passage in an eloquent historian ; and I quote it the more readily that it comes from the pen of one who never was accused of fanatical views, and whose brilliant powers were directed to anything rather than visionary anticipations of future felicity. “The hostile tribes of the North,” says Mr Gibbon, “who detested the pride and power of the King of the World, suspended their domestic feuds ; and the barbarians of the land and sea, the Scots, the Picts, and the Saxons, spread themselves with rapid and irresistible fury from the Wall of Antoninus to the shores of Kent. Their southern neighbours have exaggerated the cruel depredations of the Scots and Picts ; and a valiant tribe of Caledonia, the Attacotti, the enemies and afterwards the soldiers of Valentinian, are accused by an eye-witness of delighting in the taste of human flesh. When they hunted the woods for prey, it is said that they attacked the shepherd rather than his flock, and that they curiously selected the most delicate and brawny parts of both males and females, which they prepared for their horrid repasts. If, in the neighbourhood of the commercial and literary town of Glasgow, a race of cannibals has really existed, we may contemplate, in the period of the Scottish history, the opposite extremes of

savage and civilised life. Such reflections tend to enlarge the circle of our ideas, and to encourage the pleasing hope that New Zealand may produce, in some future age, the Hume of the Southern hemisphere." Such were the words of prophetic genius seventy years ago ; but what would Mr Gibbon have said if he had lived to the present time, and seen within that short period so vast a change in human affairs, that the event which he then regarded as almost as improbable as the barbarism of the West of Scotland, is already accomplished, and the descendants of the cannibals of Caledonia are setting forth from the shores of the Clyde, to convey to the cannibals of New Zealand the wonders of European art, and the blessings of Christian civilisation ?

These marvellous changes do indeed enlarge the circle of our ideas, for they carry us back to primeval days, and the first separation of the different races of mankind upon earth. For what said the Most High in that auspicious moment, when the eagle first sported in the returning sunbeam—when the dove brought back the olive branch to a guilty and expiring world, and the "robe of beams was woven in the sky which first spoke peace to man?"—"God shall increase Japhet, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant." God *has* multiplied Japhet, and well and nobly has he performed his destiny. After conquering in the Roman legions the ancient world—after humanising the barbarism of antiquity by the power of the Roman sway, and the influence of the Roman law, the "audax Iapeti genus" has transmitted to modern times the glorious inheritance of European freedom. After having conquered in the British Navy the empire of the seas, it has extended to the utmost verge of the earth the influence of humanised manners, and bequeathed to future ages the far more glorious inheritance of British colonisation. But mark the difference in the action of the descendants of Japhet—the European race—upon the fortunes of mankind from the influence of that religion to which the Roman Empire was the mighty pioneer. The Roman legions conquered only by the sword : fire and bloodshed attended their steps. It was said by our own ancestors, on the hills of Caledonia, that they gave peace only by establishing a solitude—*ubi solitudinem fecerunt, pacem appellant*. The British colonists

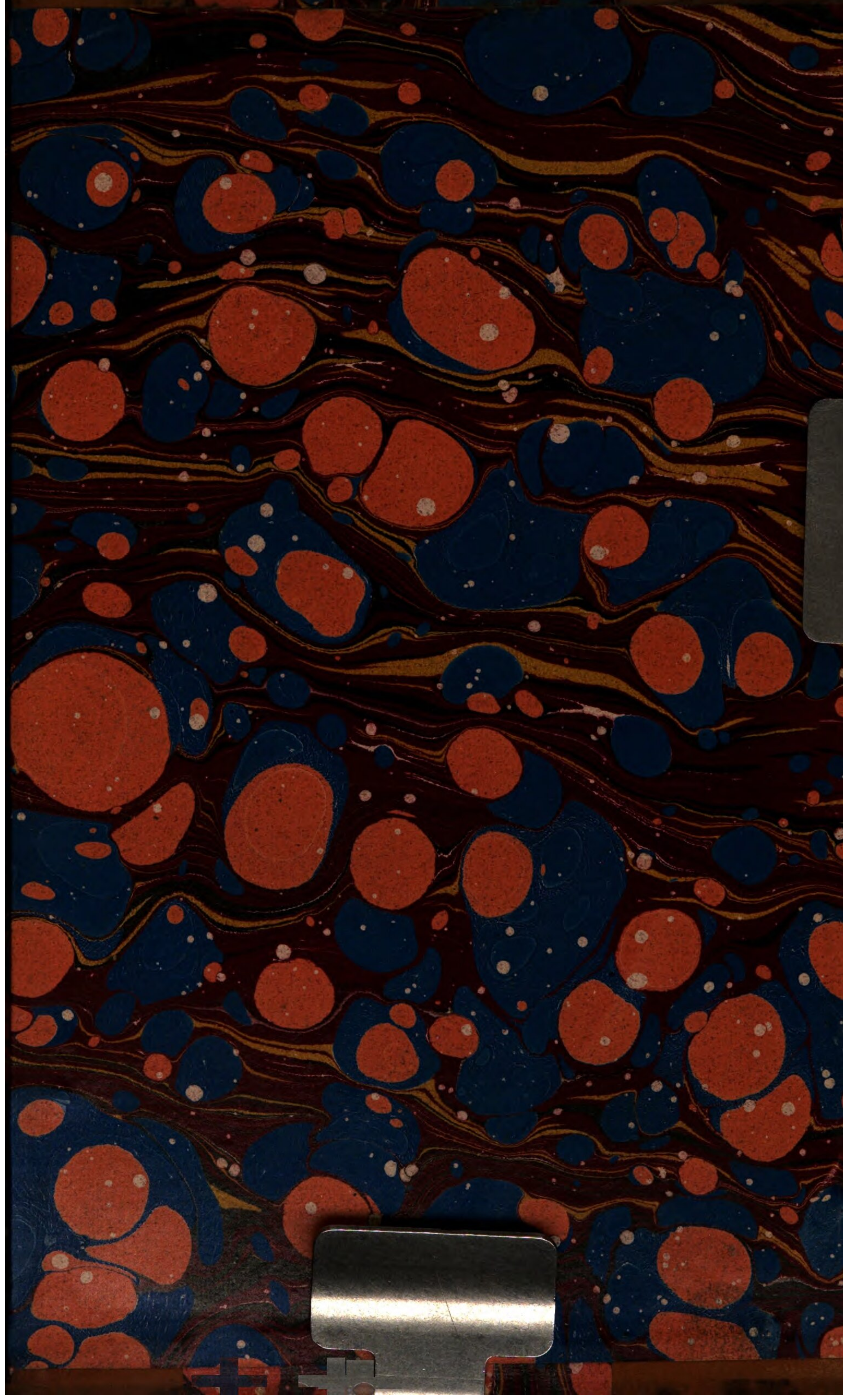
now set out with the olive branch, not the sword in their hand ; with the Cross, not the eagle on their banners. They bring not war and devastation, but peace and civilisation around their steps ; and the track of their chariot wheels is followed, not by the sighs of a captive, but by the blessings of a renovated world. “He shall dwell,” says the prophecy, “in the tents of Shem.” Till these times that prophecy has not been accomplished : the descendants of Shem—the Asiatic race—still held the fairest portion of the earth, and the march of civilisation, like the path of the sun, has hitherto been from east to west. From the plains of Shinar to the isles of Greece—from the isles of Greece to the hills of Rome—from the hills of Rome to the shores of Britain—from the shores of Britain to the wilds of America, the progress of civilisation has been steadily in one direction, and it has never reverted to the land of its birth. Is, then, this progress destined to be perpetual ? Is the tide of civilisation to roll only to the foot of the Rocky Mountains, and is the sun of knowledge to set at last in the waves of the Pacific ? No ; the mighty day of four thousand years is drawing to its close ; the sun of humanity has performed its destined course ; but long ere its setting rays are extinguished in the West, its ascending beams have glittered on the isles of the Eastern seas. We stand on the verge of the great Revolution of Time—the descendants of Japhet are about to dwell in the tents of Shem—civilisation is returning to the land of its birth, and another day and another race are beginning to dawn upon the human species. Already the British arms in India have given herald of its approach, and spread into the heart of Asia the terrors of the English name and the justness of the English rule. And now we see the race of Japhet setting forth to people the isles of the East, and the seeds of another Europe and a second England sown in the regions of the sun. But mark, Gentlemen, the words of the prophecy :—“He shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant.” It is not said Canaan shall be his *slave*. To the Anglo-Saxon race is given the sceptre of the globe—but there is not given the lash of the slave-driver, or the rack of the executioner. The East will not be stained by the same atrocities as the West ; the frightful gangrene of an enslaved race is not to

mar the destinies of the family of Japhet in the Oriental world. Humanising, not destroying as they advance—uniting with, not enslaving the inhabitants with whom they dwell, the British race may be improved in vigour and capacity in the Eastern Hemisphere, and the emigrants whom we see around us may become the progenitors of a race destined to exceed the glories of European civilisation, as much as they have outstripped the wonders of ancient enterprise. Views such as these arise unbidden at such a moment as the present, and they promise to realise the beautiful anticipations formed forty years ago by the Bard of Hope—the Poet Laureate of New Zealand—who appears in this instance to have been almost inspired by the spirit of prophecy :—

“Come, bright Improvement ! in the car of Time,
And rule the spacious world from clime to clime ;
Thy handmaid, Art, shall every wild explore,
Trace every wave and culture every shore.
On *Zealand's* hills, where Tigers steal along,
And the dread Indian chaunts a dismal song ;
Where human fiends on midnight errands walk,
And bathe in brains the murderous tomahawk ;
There shall the flocks on thymy pastures stray,
And shepherds dance at Summer's opening day ;
Each wandering Genius of the lonely glen
Shall start to view the glittering haunts of men ;
And Silence mark on woodland heights around
The village curfew as it tolls profound.”

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.







Alison, Archibald / Hase, Charles Benoît / Palm, Johann Friedrich

Essays political, historical, and miscellaneous

Bd.: 2

Edinburgh 1850

H.misc. 3 m-2

urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10737446-6